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SOUTHAMPTON
STREET

January,
1921.

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No. 361
VOL 61

TORIES BY

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PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM - "SAPPER"

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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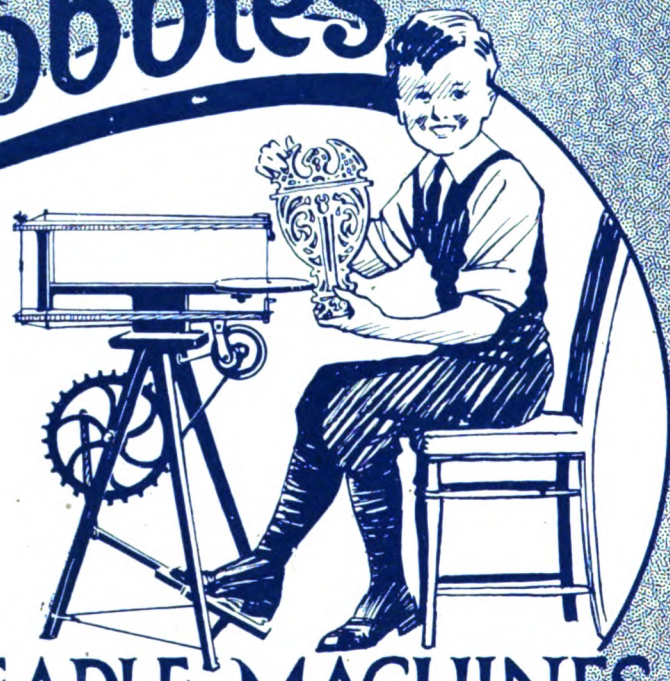

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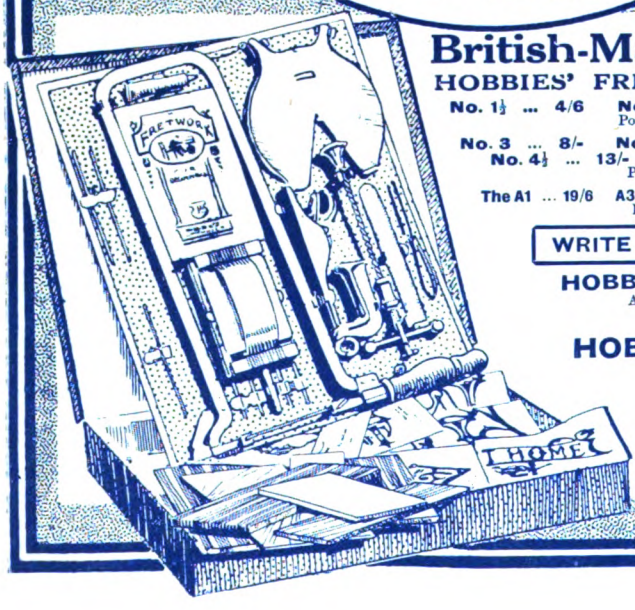

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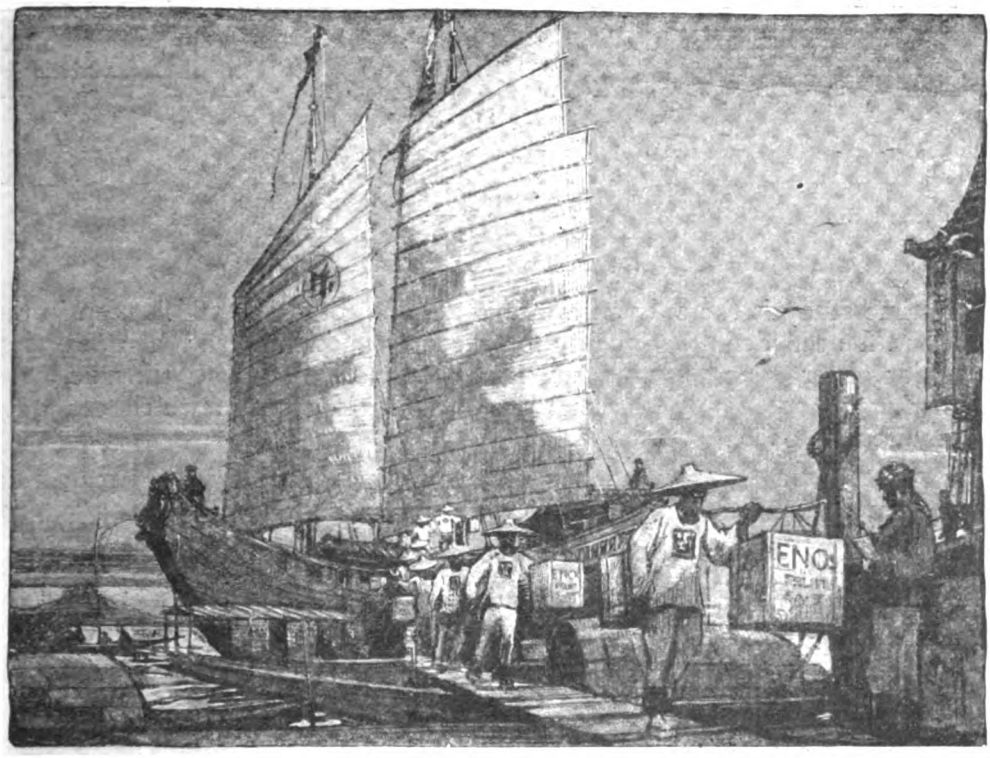

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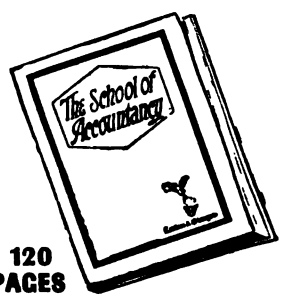

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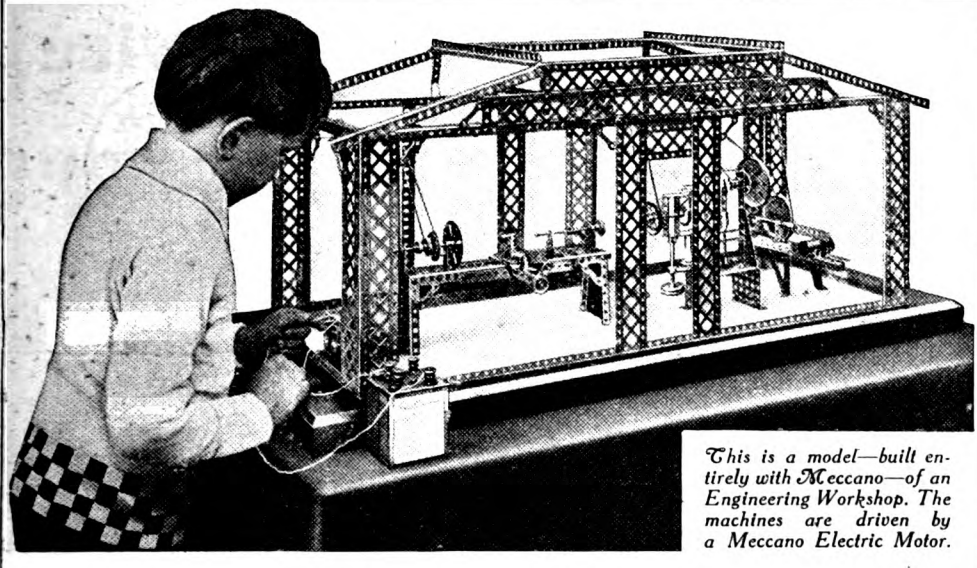

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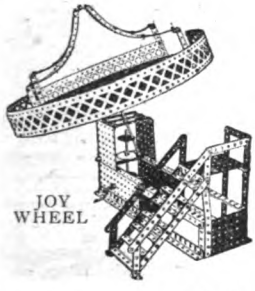

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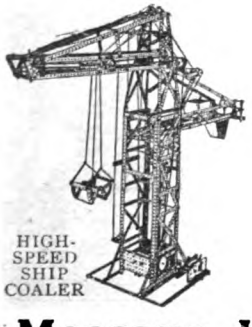

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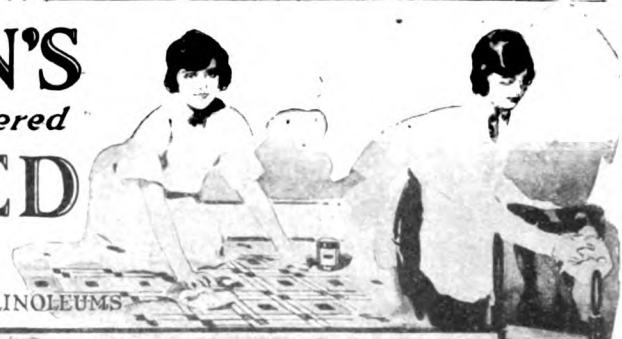

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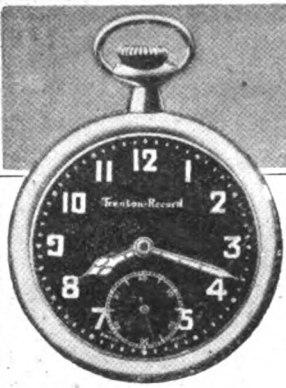

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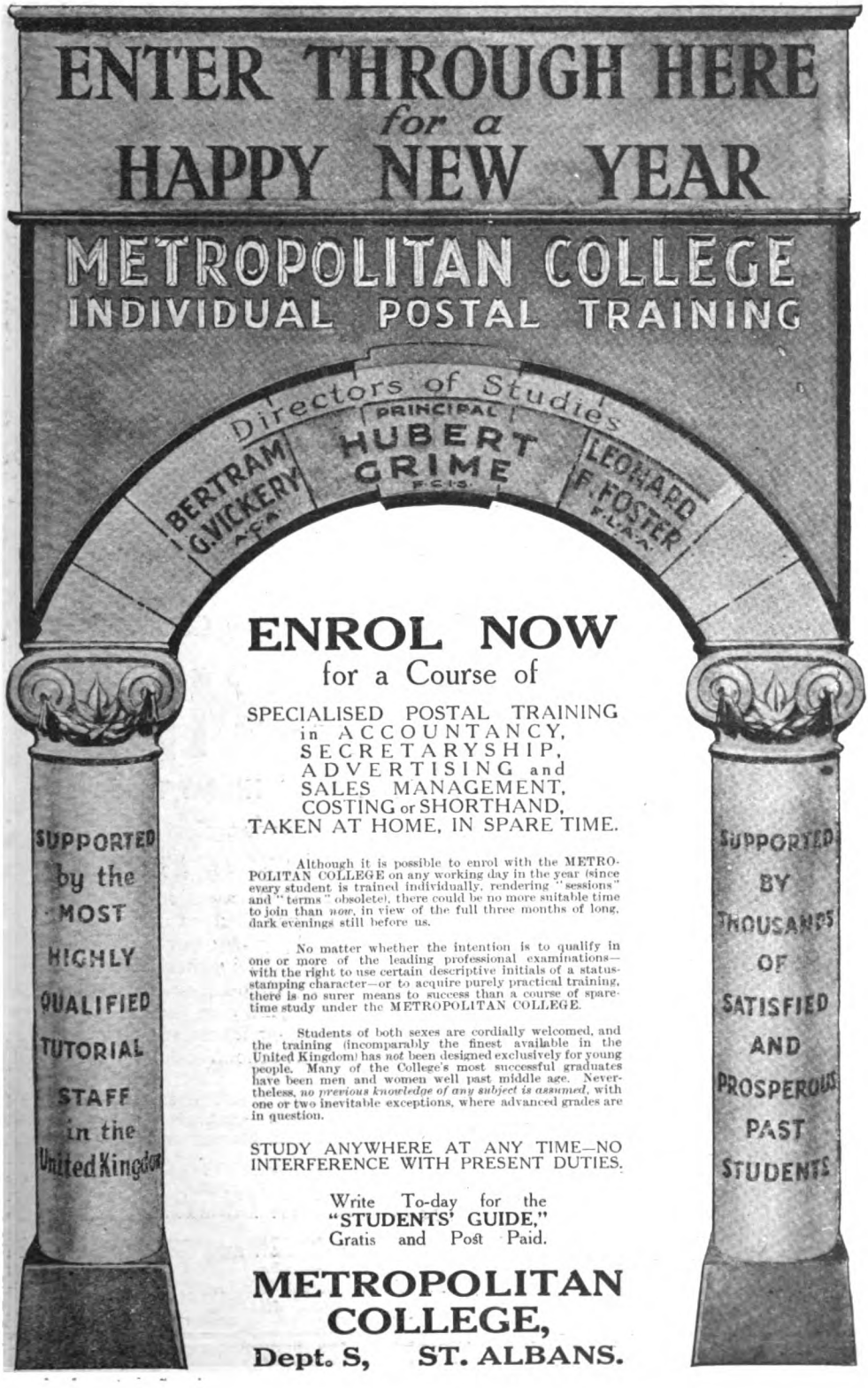

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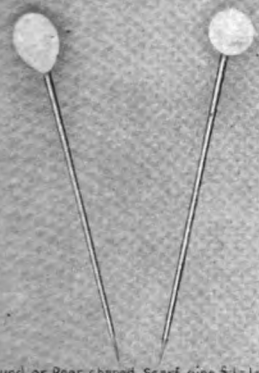

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Hovis is different from every other bread. Never confuse Hovis with ordinary brown bread: Hovis is much more nourishing, and it is the most digestible bread obtainable.

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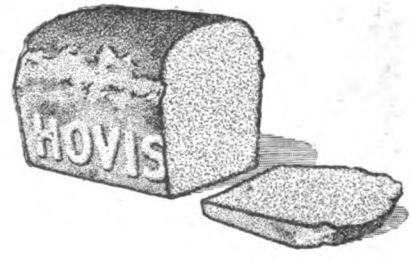

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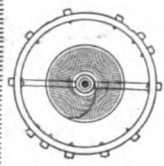
2 The Hairspring



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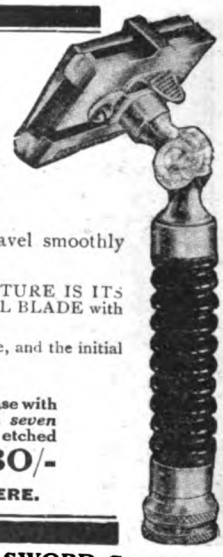

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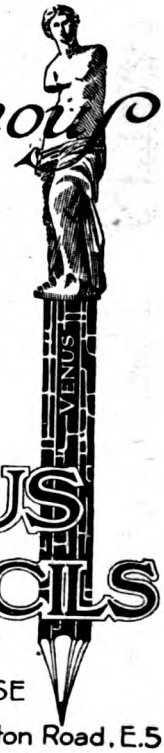

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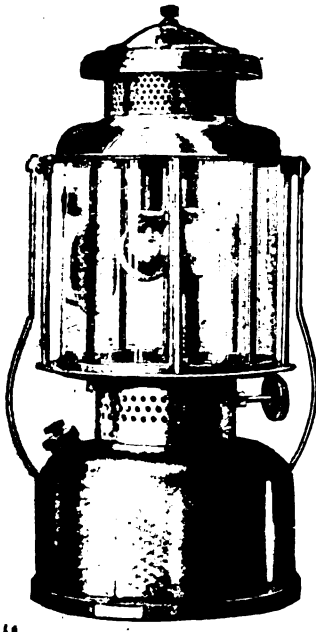

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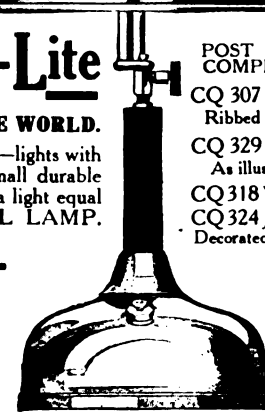

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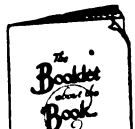

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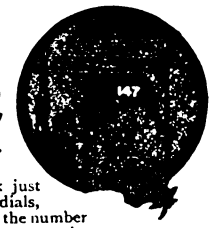

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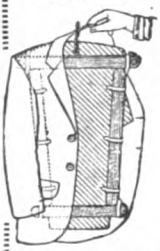

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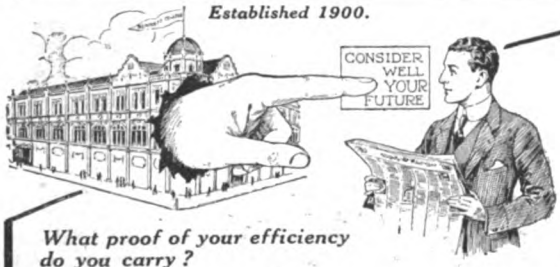

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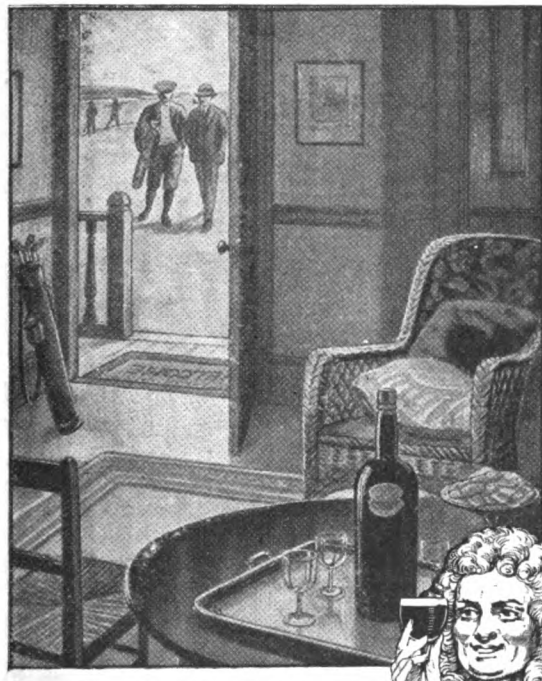

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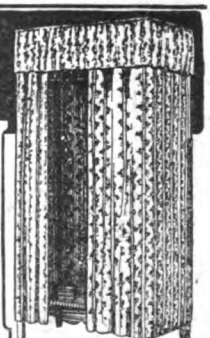

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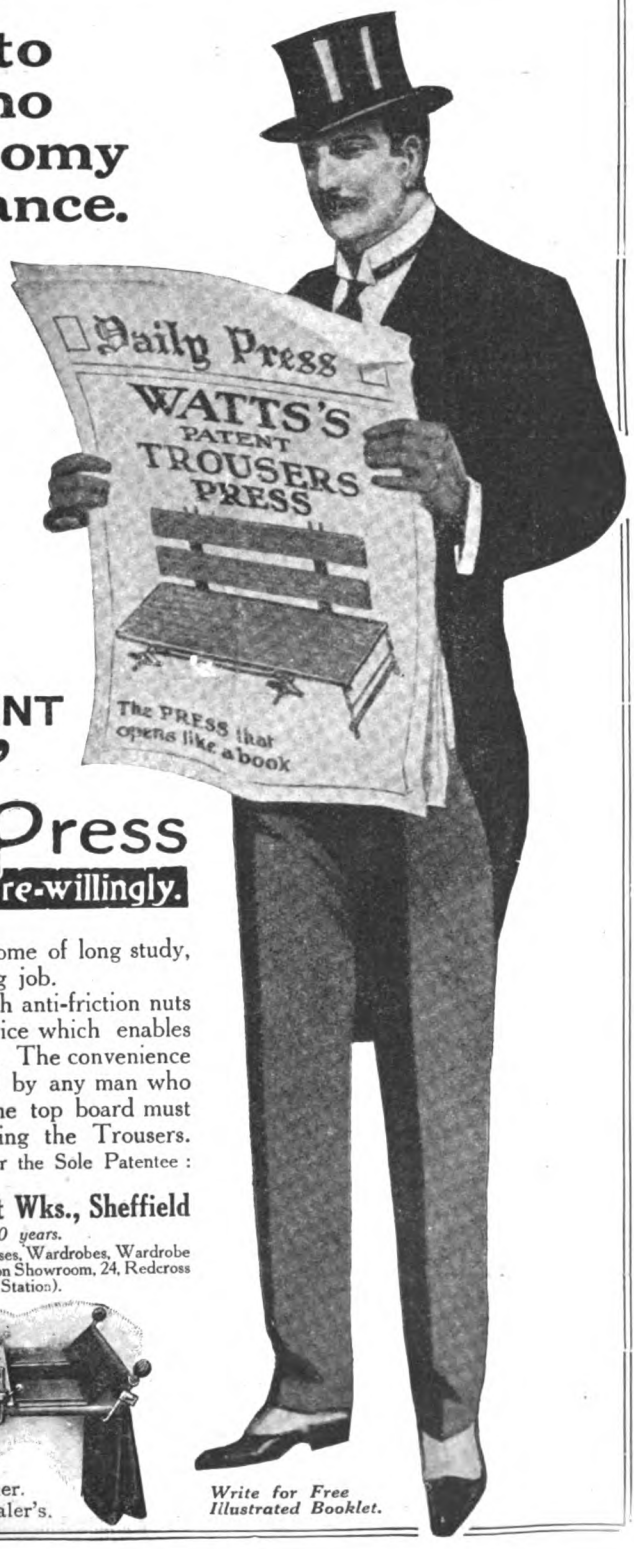

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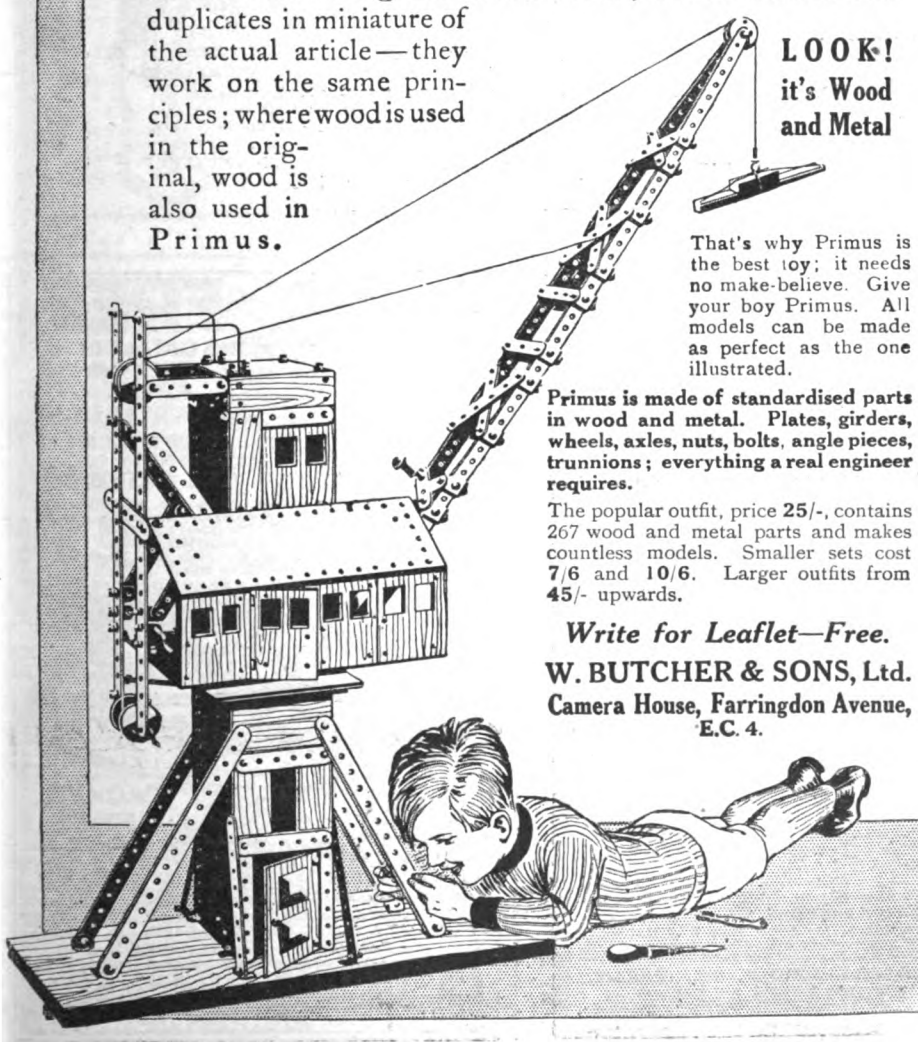

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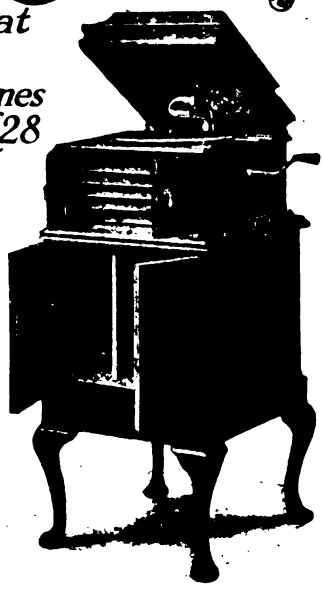

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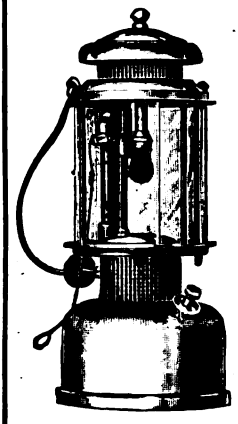

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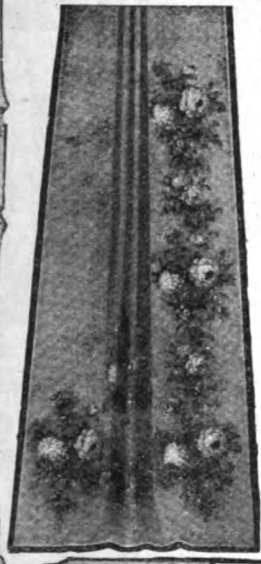

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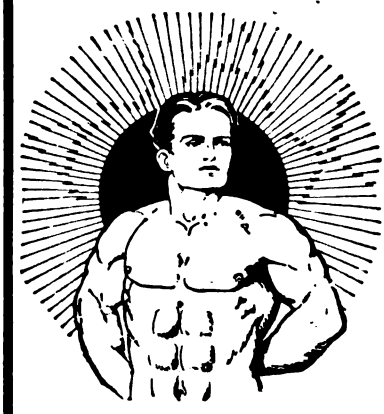

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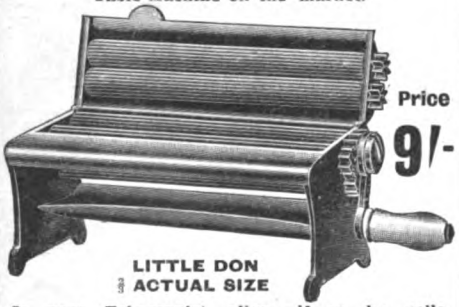

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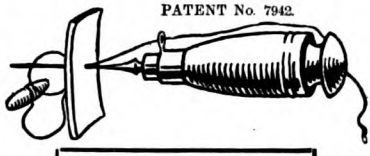

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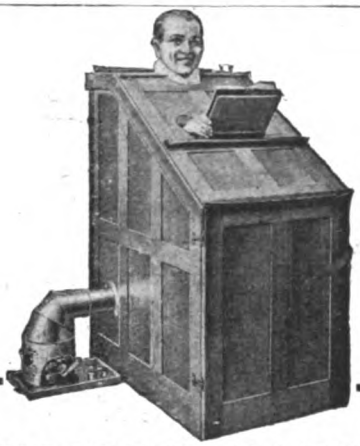

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Contents for January, 1921.

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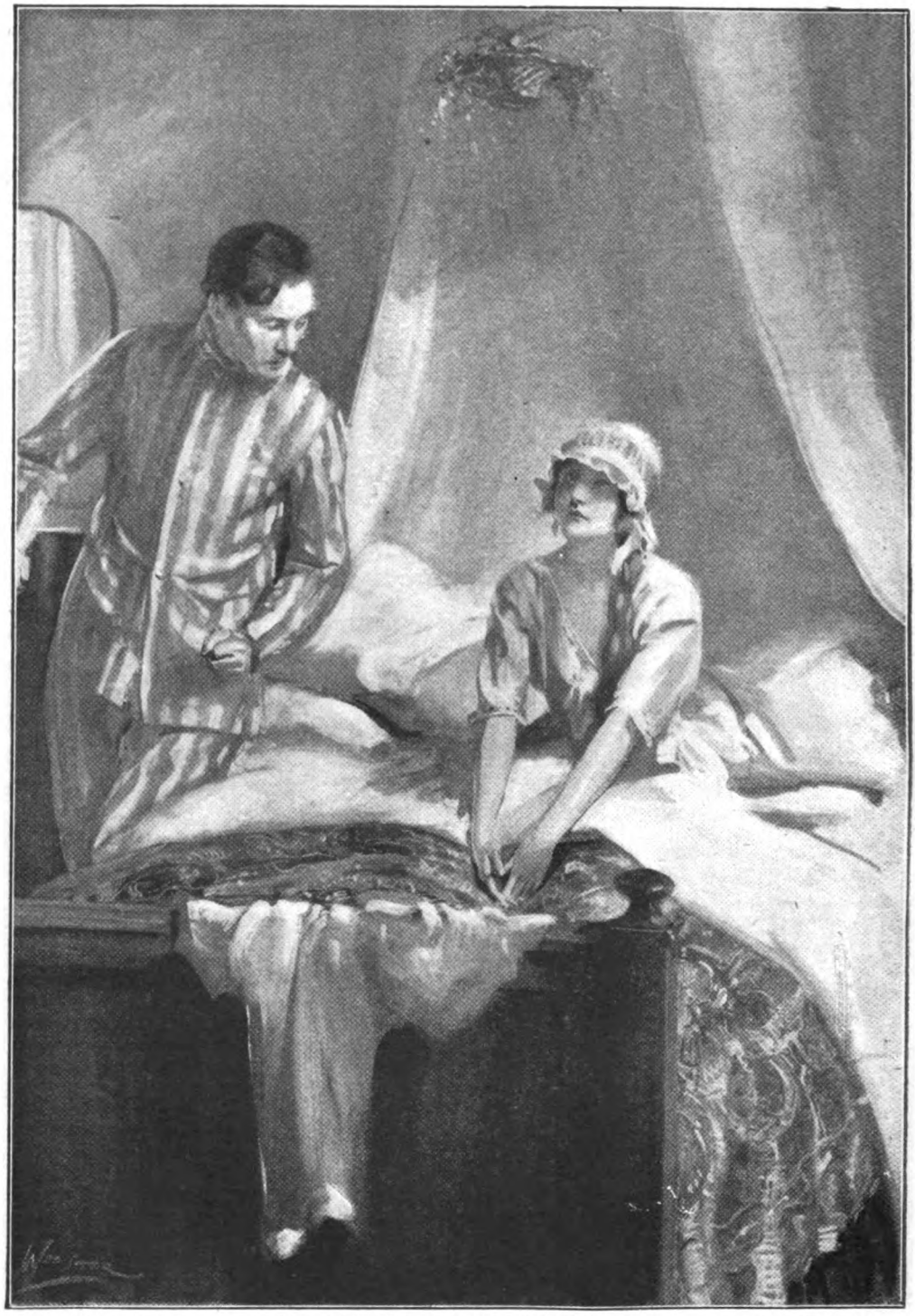


"ROBERT LEAPED FROM THE BED, CLENCHING HIS HANDS. 'YOU MUST BE JOKING! YOU DON'T MEAN TO SAY YOU'LL GO TO THAT MAN'S HOUSE?'"

(*See page* 10.)

Love Wins

Sarah Bernhardt comes out as a Short Story Writer.

by

SARAH BERNHARDT

ILLUSTRATED BY W.E. WEBSTER

The great French actress here tells a story of the Stage which she knows so well. It is a new departure which will excite great interest, and readers will look forward with eagerness to the other stories from her pen which we shall publish in early numbers.

STANDING on tip-toe, her delicate eyebrows drawn into straight lines and her lips pressed together, Arlette d'Ormange pulled tighter the knot of her husband's cravat and settled it into place.

"There!" she said, with satisfaction, and while he stood in the helpless attitude of the husband at such moments she added a final word of advice. "I beg you, do not be too modest, Robert. If you have a fault, it is that you are too modest. Did not your professor at the Lycée Concordet say so? Above all, do not forget what I have said to you—read your play to Monsieur Courleville, and on no account leave the manuscript. I have seen that man, and I do not trust him."

She backed away, regarding her husband's toilet critically, while he stood awaiting her judgment. He was a young man, but, in spite of his twenty-three years, strangers did not say of Robert d'Ormange, "What a handsome boy!" but "What a charming man!" His wife, having finished her scrutiny, blew him a kiss from the tips of her fingers and cried, "Perfect! You are perfect!"

Then, taking a thick manuscript from the table, she rolled it carefully, fastened the ends with rubber bands, and tenderly gave it to him. "If Monsieur Courleville is sincere, he will have your play produced at once, for it is superb."

Taking the pretty face between his hands, he kissed her fondly, but with an indulgent laugh. "Isn't that just like a woman! Superb! Poor little darling, your tenderness for me blinds you."

Arlette shook her fluffy head stubbornly. "To say that I love you is not to say that I am blind. It *is* a superb play. You have a novel situation in it, and I am sure that you have written it beautifully."

"But, my dear—superb?"

"Superb!" Arlette repeated, energetically. "You have written it, but I, I have read and re-read it. And my opinion is important, sir! Am I not secretary to Robert d'Ormange, Assistant Professor of Literature at the Lycée Concordet, husband of the ravishing Arlette d'Ormange, and soon to be acclaimed as the great playwright? Superb, I say!"

With his arms around her, she tipped her head backward to utter the last three words, in a tone of passionate conviction, before his lips touched hers The kiss thanked her for the confidence he felt born in him.

"You must go, dear, or you will be late,"

she said, conducting him to the stairway outside their door. Leaning on the banister, she watched him descend, and when he had gone so far that dignity would not permit him to reply, she cried down the stairs, " Superb ! Superb ! "

An intangible sense of happiness pervaded the three tiny rooms to which she returned—rooms which for eight months now they had made their home.

Arlette was the daughter of a foreman in a button factory. Fortune had given the factory foreman and his wife two children. Georgina, the hard-fibred, impulsive rebel, and Arlette, the wistful, sensitive dreamer. The parents had worshipped Arlette without understanding her; without understanding Georgina, they had tried to conquer her. It was one of the silent, unnoticed tragedies in the hearts of commonplace families. At sixteen Georgina was living her own headstrong life with a travelling stock company in the south of France. Arlette, in her fifteenth year, was working in a florist's shop in the Rue Bremontier.

MME. CAMPON, the florist, was a woman whose soul, within its covering of round and ample flesh, remained as young as the infantile lines of her plump hands. She loved and knew flowers; she knew and loved Arlette. Love for the girl and love for her young cousin, Robert d'Ormange, came together in her heart and made the romance upon which her life centred after the death of her own adored daughter, a pitiful and surly hunchback who died in adolescence. It was the florist who sent Robert d'Ormange into the courtyard where Arlette worked among the Easter lilies; it was she who watched the light in the young student's eyes and the flush in Arlette's cheeks, and it was she to whom Robert came with his first confidences, begging her to ask Arlette's parents to give him their daughter in marriage. He was a poor student, and Arlette had no *dot*. The parents hesitated, and Arlette's tears glistened among the drops of water with which she sprinkled the violets each morning. But Mme. Campon came to the rescue, giving her little *protégée* the twelve thousand francs that she had saved franc by franc for her own dead daughter. It was money enough to furnish a modest apartment; Robert earned three hundred and fifty francs a month. The parents consented to give him the hand of Arlette, then seventeen years old, and the cloudy skies of a Paris July were filled with rainbows for Robert and his little *fiancée*, who, under the approving eyes of Mme. Campon, kissed each other behind the counter among the roses.

A serious little girl, the *fiancée*, though she was only seventeen and looked like a spray of lilies-of-the-valley in the sunshine, as Mme. Campon said. Knowing the burden her young husband was lifting to his shoulders, she set herself secretly to learn typewriting, planning when they were married to surprise Robert by being able to contribute something to their small income. But Robert's surprise had not been as happy as she had anticipated. When he recovered from the shock of it he sternly refused her his permission to work for others. Still, her typewriting had brought her the joy of feeling that she was helping him with the great play, which he had allowed her to copy for him.

" Superb ! " she repeated to herself, thinking of it. " If only he will read it to Monsieur Courleville as he has read it to me ! " Robert had been gone only ten minutes, but she was already leaning from the window, watching the entrance to the courtyard below. " Above all things, he must not leave the manuscript. I don't like Monsieur Courleville's smile," she thought, uneasily.

At that moment Robert was climbing the two flights of broad stairs that led to the famous man's apartment. He held the manuscript carefully in his gloved hand and tapped the steps with his cane, trying with an aspect of jaunty self-confidence to hide his trepidation. But the attempt failed in the presence of the valet who received him and ushered him into a luxurious salon.

" Monsieur Courleville will be with you in a few moments," the man said, closing the door softly. Robert, waiting uneasily, saw that the great dramatist was a lover of paintings and engravings. They were everywhere, on the silk-covered walls, on the gilded satin-upholstered chairs, even on the floor leaning against inlaid tables. He examined them with interest, for he loved all the arts and, young as he was, knew not a little about them.

" That is not a Tiepolo ! " he said to himself. " That cannot be a Tiepolo ! " He had read the signature on one of the canvases, but he could not believe it, for the picture was a smudge, from which appeared a poorly-drawn head. Leaning closer to read once more the incredible signature, he heard a movement behind him, and turned round quickly.

M. Courleville was a large, handsome man whose eyes were ostentatiously frank. He spoke with large, open gestures that said, " See how honest I am, concealing nothing ! " With such a gesture he approached Robert, who nervously clutched his manuscript and cleared his throat. But M. Courleville spoke first. " What do you think of my Tiepolo ? "

" I do not think it is a Tiepolo," the young man replied, too quickly. M. Courleville

"'You must go, dear, or you will be late,' she said, and leaning on the banister she watched him descend."

flushed slightly, and Robert saw that the frankness of his eyes was denied by the thin, pinched mouth that turned down at the corners.

"Ah! You are a connoisseur, I see!" the dramatist said, laughing heartily. "Well, you have come to show me a manuscript. Give it to me; I will read it. You can rely on me, you know; I am absolutely frank. Yes, yes, as frank as you are," he added, indicating the picture. "You will hear from me soon, my friend. Good afternoon."

He took the roll and, with a courteous bow, left the room as quickly as he had entered it. Robert had not been able to speak a word after his unhappy verdict on the false Tiepolo. The valet reappeared, opening the door, and the young man found himself again in the street.

Arlette, having told herself twenty times that Robert could not possibly return within an hour, was nevertheless still gazing downward at the arched entrance of the courtyard. Her eyes widened with surprise and alarm when he appeared. Even the top of his hat and the foreshortened glimpse of his nervously-agitated cane seemed to her to express something of indecision and dismay. He passed beneath the trees, hesitated at the doorway, and then, without glancing upward, gripped his cane more firmly and entered. She heard him whistling bravely as he climbed the stairs.

"Robert! What has happened?" she cried, meeting him on the landing.

"Nothing. Nothing at all, my dear," he replied. "Monsieur Courleville was most kind."

"What did he say about the play?"

"Well, he didn't exactly say anything," Robert explained. He took off his gloves while she stood anxiously holding his hat and cane. "Of course, he is a very busy man. He promised to give me his opinion as soon as possible."

"Oh, Robert! And you left the play with

him? You didn't even read it to him," she told him, dismayed.

"Never mind, *ma chérie*. Don't bother your little head about it," he answered, drawing her to him and kissing the curl that lay against her cheek. "You don't understand these things, darling. You know I did the best I could."

"Of course, Robert dear. But I wish you had not left it with him. You know I don't trust him at all."

" But you don't know anything about him ! You have seen him only once, passing in a carriage. Be reasonable, sweetheart. It's absurd to look at a man and say you can't trust him—a man whom all the world respects, too."

She sat on his knee, running a finger round and round a button on his coat. " Tell me just what happened, Robert dear," she coaxed, with the charm of an infant who begs for a fairy story ; and her large, attentive eyes drew the truth from him.

" You see, I did the best I could, little one. I was wrong perhaps to tell him that his picture was an imitation Tiepolo, but he took it in good part. I am sure he was not offended. And there was no choice about leaving the play with him. I was in his house, asking him for a favour ; he took the manuscript in the most cordial way, and did not stop talking until he left the room. I couldn't interrupt him, could I ? "

" Of course not, dearest. Only I wish—but that doesn't matter, and I am only a stupid little thing. Come, luncheon is waiting."

When the meal was over and Robert had gone to the Lycée, Arlette cleared the table and sat down to needlework. She smiled to herself while her fingers moved daintily above the weblike threads, and when the sharp trill of the doorbell struck through the silence she started as though awakened from a dream. Quickly she crossed the room and opened the tiny Judas-window, for Robert had made her promise solemnly never to unlock the door without first seeing her visitor.

" Oh, it's you ! " she cried, flinging the door wide and throwing herself into the arms of her sister Georgina.

" Yes, it's what's left of me," said Georgina, heartily returning the hug. " And you, little one ? You are well ? " Without waiting for a reply, she plumped herself into a chair, breathing with a violence that shook the plumes in her hat like trees in a wind. " Wait till I get my breath. Four steep flights of stairs, and no lift ! You know, I have lost the habit of such climbing."

ARLETTE laughed, fanning her sister with an end of Georgina's scarf. " It's true the stairs are steep. But I'm only a little middle-class wife, and not a beautiful actress spoiled by lifts ! "

" You are a love of a little sister," Georgina answered, fondly. " And climbing stairs does help one to keep one's figure. But I did not pant up to these heights to talk about myself. Listen, my pet. I chose this hour purposely because your husband is at the Lycée. Though I must say he isn't as cranky as our dear father, who has forbidden mamma to see me. Not that that prevents our meeting every week. Just because I want to live independently and refuse to marry they will do nothing but quarrel with me. But all the same, I am what is called an honest girl—you know that, Arlette, and mamma knows it too. But people do not want to believe it. Men think so much of themselves that they imagine a woman cannot live without their love and protection. Oh, well, as for me, I love no one and have need of no one, and I am happy enough. But it is not to repeat all this that I have come to you, in spite of your stairs. It is just that one word leads to another, until a sentence becomes a speech. It is idiotic. Forget it. Now listen, my sweetest. Did your husband take a play to Courleville lately ? "

" Yes, this morning. ' Love Wins.' But how—— "

" That's it ! A good name, too, that would advertise well. Is it a good play ? "

" A good play ! Oh, Georgina, it's a wonderful play ! "

" I thought so ! I said to myself that it was, when I saw how careful he was to hide the manuscript from me ! " Georgina exclaimed, the plumes in her hat nodding vigorously in support of her words.

" But how did you know about it ? "

" To-day I lunched with that shameless pirate. He wanted to see me about my part, and I lunched in his apartment because I am unconventional and I know how to treat a man like that. He talked about a new play, and I was curious to know the name of the latest victim he was preparing to strangle, for I know him ! He lives by stealing the ideas of young unknown writers, like a thief of the streets. While we were eating a visitor arrived, and Courleville left the table at once to see him, for it was a member of the Academy, and Courleville hopes to be elected. He is eaten up with vanity, like an apple with maggots. Well, while he was gone I lost no time. I read the name on the manuscript he had left beside his plate. You can imagine what a turn it gave me to see the name of my sister's husband ! At that instant Courleville hurried back, and while I pretended to have seen nothing he took the manuscript, looking at me as sharply as though he thought that I, too, was a thief. Oh, it is simple enough for him ! He poses as a patron of the arts, he draws young men to him for advice and help, they give him their plays. He changes the names of the characters, or does some little thing to the plot, and *voilà !* a new play by the great Courleville, and he grows fatter with money and praise. All the world knows it."

Arlette's eyes were wide with amazement. " But, Georgina ! How can he ? Why do they let him do it, if everybody knows ? "

" Oh, as for that, everybody's business is nobody's business. Knowing a thing is not proving it, and one has troubles enough without bothering with the troubles of others. As for the public, if it is amused it asks no questions. The managers of theatres aren't eager to offend a man who brings them successful plays; the Society of Authors does not want a scandal. Who is left to attack the brigand Courleville? Only the victims whose bones he has already picked. Believe me, my poor Arlette, he is about to make a meal of your husband."

" Oh, I knew he wasn't a man to be trusted! The moment I saw him I did not like his mouth. But, Georgina, it is the play Robert has been working on for two years!" cried Arlette. Two large tears trembled on her lashes, but no others followed them, for her eyes were dried by anger. " It is an outrage!"

" Yes, yes, it is an outrage. But what can one do?"

" We must do something!" Arlette said, springing to her feet. " Georgina, you know the theatre managers. Couldn't you take Robert's play to them, yourself? At once, before that man has time——"

She opened the drawer of her little desk, and suddenly stood as dumb as a statue of horror. Georgina hurried to her. " My dear! What is it?"

" Oh, Georgina, I haven't any other copy of the play! It is all my fault. I have ruined my darling Robert. He trusted me, Georgina; he trusted me to copy his play, and I only made one copy. I had no carbon paper, and it costs so much. I meant to make another. I didn't know he was g ing to take it to M. Courleville to-day."

" But the manuscript—the original manuscript!" babbled Georgina, patting Arlette's shaken shoulders. " You have the manuscript?"

" I remember now that I left it on the chair, and the m-maid must have taken it away. It is her day for selling all the waste paper. Oh, Georgina, it is gone, and Robert is ruined!"

" Never mind, *chérie*, never mind!" Georgina repeated, kissing Arlette's hair. " It will be all right. Your husband can write another play. I will myself see what can be done. You will gain nothing by spoiling your complexion with tears. Perhaps the manuscript can be found. Be brave, little one. Do not lose heart. Alas! I must hurry. I go on at three o'clock in the second act. *Mon Dieu!* It is already two!" she exclaimed, glancing at the clock and kissing Arlette's wet cheeks. " Do not cry any more, darling; it will not please Robert. Tears are all very well now and then, but no man likes swollen eyelids." Hastily seizing her handbag, she once more embraced her sister and hurried away, leaving Arlette in despair.

When Robert came home she tried to meet his happy kiss with her usual ardour, but her lips trembled with the dread of telling him the terrible news. Her pale face troubled him; he asked at once if she had a headache, and she could only answer truthfully that she had. He made her lie down, surrounded her with pillows, and commanded her to be quiet. His clumsy care brought an ache to her throat, and she lay holding back her tears with tightly-closed lids, trying to gather courage to speak. She began faintly, " Georgina was here this afternoon."

Robert's hand on her forehead started slightly, and then resumed its gentle stroking. He did not like Arlette seeing her sister.

" Was she as foolish as usual?" he asked, in a voice that tried to be patient.

" She—she didn't seem—foolish," Arlette murmured. " She——"

" Yes, yes, sweetheart. She will become more reasonable as she grows older. I don't doubt that," Robert said, kindly. " All I ask is that she doesn't meddle in my affairs. Don't try to talk, my dear, till your headache is better."

The two tears that slipped down Arlette's cheeks terrified her husband. He took her in his arms and, carrying her into the bedroom, tenderly undressed her and put her between the cool sheets, forbidding her to utter another word. She heard him struggling with the gas stove in the transformed kitchen, and some time later he returned proudly with a bowl of hot broth, with which he fed her spoonful by spoonful while she swallowed obediently, too deeply touched to tell him that the soup was too salt. Then, exhausted, she fell asleep, holding his hand.

NEXT morning, having ascertained that the maid had sold the manuscript with a bundle of old newspapers to a ragman, Arlette found him in his dingy basement and with her own fastidious hands searched through sacks of waste paper by the light of a guttering candle, but she did not find the manuscript. Still she refused to believe her fears, until the day when Robert came up the stairs with a letter from M. Courleville. She leaned against his arm and they read it together:—

" MONSIEUR,—*I have read with pleasure 'Love Wins.' There are good bits in it, very good bits indeed, but as a whole the play seems to me amateurish, and hardly suitable for production. Do not be discouraged, continue to work, write another play. Remember that a young writer seldom succeeds with his first effort. My frankness will prove to you my sincerity.* " *Yours,* COURLEVILLE.

"P.S.—I am keeping your manuscript, which I shall send you soon with more detailed criticism."

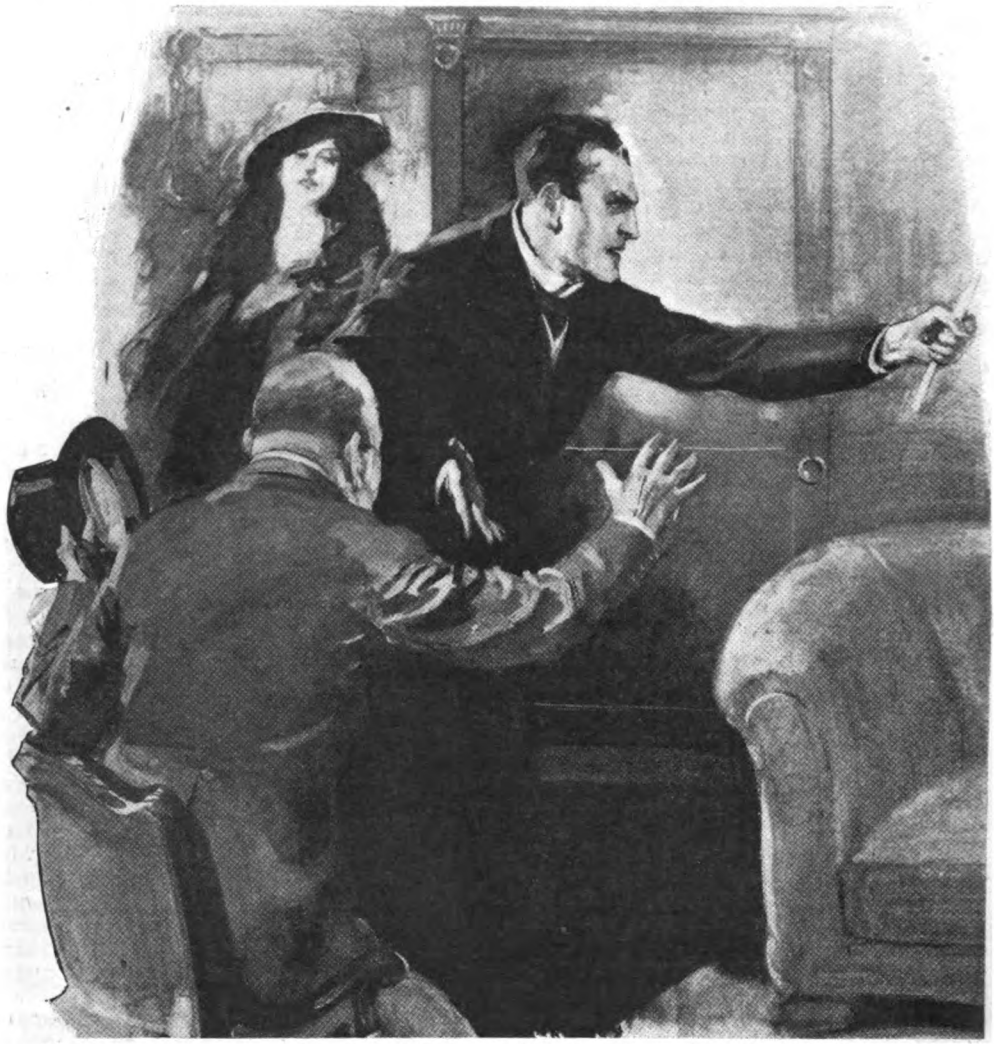
"Don't look so miserable, sweetheart," Robert said, as cheerfully as he could.

Arlette clung to him, trying to speak.

"That man—that man is a thief!" she said, in a strangled voice.

luncheon, wrapped in a piece of newspaper, brought a telegram addressed to Arlette, which Robert opened for her. It was from Georgina, announcing that she would call at one o'clock. Arlette felt a despairing hope.

"You don't mind, do you, Robert?" she asked, anxiously, seeing his frown.



"Arlette began to read, when Courleville bounded from his chair. 'What's that?' the play you

"Oh, no, I don't think that," Robert answered. "Though perhaps I was wrong to leave the manuscript. But after all, probably the play is no good. Never mind, I will try again. Don't be so disappointed, little one; some day you shall have your beautiful dresses and jewels."

The maid, arriving with the hot dish for

"Of course I mind. I don't like Georgina, dearest, you know that, and I don't like her coming here to put ideas into my little wife's head. I don't deny she is clever, very clever, but that does not prevent her from piling foolishness upon foolishness. With all her talk of independence, she isn't as happy as you are, is she?"

"Oh, no, Robert!" Arlette said, earnestly. "But——"

"Yes, I know, my darling. She is your sister, and naturally you love her. That is why I do not forbid you to see her. But you can't expect me to like it," he added. Then, seeing that he had hurt her, he took her in his arms and kissed her, and soon she was smiling again.

When he had gone she watched anxiously for her sister, and at the first glimpse of the bobbing plumes she ran to open the door, while Georgina panted up the stairs.

"Well, it is as I expected," said Georgina, falling into a chair that creaked loudly, astonished at the unexpected weight. "He's done it. He's stolen the play and offered it to the manager of the Porte St. Martin Theatre, who has accepted it. That is, merely the plot, you understand. They dined together last night and discussed it. Courleville begins work on the play itself to-day."

"Oh, no! Oh, Georg——"

"Wait. Let me tell you the whole thing. It is not for nothing that I have spent a whole week flattering that man, with all the airs of an *ingénue*. La, la! they fall quickly into traps baited with food for their vanity, the men! Listen to me. He does not know that you are my sister and that I love you. Yes, yes, don't be impatient. Observe with me the irony of chance. This very morning that thief, that shameless brigand, asked me—listen, now! — asked me if I knew a clever typist."

he cried. 'That,' said Arlette, 'is the play written by Robert d'Ormange, tried to steal.'"

Arlette rose from her chair.

"Yes, my angel!" Georgina continued, chuckling. "Isn't it perfect? You may imagine I told him I knew one. 'She is somewhat stupid,' I said, 'and do not let me catch you at any nonsense with her, for she is a good girl and I am responsible to her parents. But she is as clever with her fingers, my dear Courleville, as you are clever with your mind.' Darling, he falls into our hands like a ripe plum. I have made an appointment for you to see him to-morrow morning at nine o'clock."

"Oh, how I love you! How I love you!" cried Arlette, flinging her arms around Georgina's neck.

"Now, now!" said Georgina, brusquely

hiding her emotion. "You're crushing my hat, and you know better than to make me buy a new one in these days, when butter is so dear!" She laughed again. "Well, *chérie*, I leave you to fight it out with your Robert, but I depend on you to keep the appointment. Some day your husband will forgive me my love of liberty and write a good part for me," she added, embracing her sister in farewell.

When Robert returned Arlette faced him, quivering with excitement. "Georgina came to tell me that Courleville has stolen your play and sold it as his own to the manager of the Porte St. Martin!" she exclaimed.

Robert sat down as though his legs had crumpled, and then bounded up again.

"Is she sure of that?"

"Quite sure. But don't talk about it, Robert. It makes me sick to think of it."

"It is infamous!" cried Robert, striding round the room, gesticulating. "It is impossible! He has sold my play? What can I do? Nothing. I am unknown, a nobody. No one would believe it. And he steals—he dares to steal my play? Two years of work, and he will fatten on it. My play, that has my heart's blood in it! The scoundrel! the——"

Arlette flung herself upon the couch and wept aloud. Her nerves had given way under the strain; her tears were sincere. Robert called himself a brute to have forgotten her in his own rage. He knelt beside her, imploring her to stop crying. Her sobs became more violent; his tenderness increased her unhappiness, but she remained determined to wring from him the consent she could get in no other way. "Will you—will you really do what I want?" she asked.

"Yes, yes, darling. Anything. I swear it! Tell me what it is, and I will do it, if you will only be calm. Arlette, you will make yourself ill."

"I want—I want you to let me——"

"I will let you do anything you want to do, little one. I promise," he said, without reflection. Her sobs ceased gradually and she lay in his arms breathing in long, shuddering sighs. Now that she had won she was half terrified by her victory.

"Tell me, dear, what it is you want to do."

"Not now," she said. "To-morrow."

DAWN found them both awake but silent, he ready to oppose he knew not what, she determined not to release him from his blind promise. At seven o'clock he rose and opened the shutters.

"I am going out this morning," Arlette said, firmly. "I have an appointment at nine o'clock."

Robert turned his head quickly. "You are going out this morning! Where are you going?"

"Ah, that is my secret! You promised me I could have what I wanted. Well, this is what I want, dearest." She would have snuggled her head into the hollow of his shoulder, but he sat up, seizing her arm roughly. "I want to know where you are going," he said.

She flushed and turned pale under his look. "Robert," she stammered, "don't you—don't you trust me?"

There was such despair in her voice and such candour in her eyes that he softened. "Arlette, don't be stubborn. Tell me where you are going. I have given you my word, but——"

"Then you will let me do what I have resolved to do? You swear it?"

"I have already told you that I will let you do it," he said, unnerved. "But tell me what it is."

"Well, I am going at nine o'clock to present myself as a typist to M. Courleville."

Robert leaped from the bed, clenching his hands. "You must be joking! You don't mean to say you'll go to that man's house?"

"I must, Robert. I won't let him rob you of the success you've earned."

Robert struck his fist against the bedpost. "That sister of yours has turned your head. I should have forbidden her to enter the house."

"You would have created between us, dear, a situation that would have ended our love."

"But what can you expect to do in that man's house?"

"I have told you. I am going to copy the play—your play. And I swear to you that within a week I shall find some way to make that bandit beg for mercy."

"She is mad—mad!" cried Robert. "How can you suppose that you will be able to defeat a villain like that, a man who lives by deceit and theft? You—a child who knows nothing whatever about the world?"

Arlette sank back against the pillows. Robert was discussing the possibility, which meant that she could persuade him to admit it. She had as a final weapon his promise, the promise to which she meant unrelentingly to hold him. It was a weapon that she used until, defeated but not wholly conquered, Robert yielded.

"When shall you be home?" he asked.

"If I work to-day I will return at eleven. If he does not want me this morning I will come back immediately."

He turned his back upon her and let her go without another word. She stopped on the way to lift her veil and wipe the tears from her eyes, but she was determined not to weaken. She rang M. Courleville's bell

firmly, and said to the valet, " Say that it is the typist."

" Monsieur is expecting you," the man replied, leading the way to a small room next the dramatist's study. She sat down, folding her hands to keep them from trembling, and in a moment she heard a voice saying, " Good ! It's your typist."

" Shall I tell her you want her to begin work at once, old boy ? " Georgina's voice answered.

" Yes, do that. Oh, and tell her that I will give her two hundred francs to copy the play. That's enough, isn't it ? "

" Enough—it's too much ! You're a generous old dear," Georgina replied, coming to her sister.

" I can hear everything that's said in there," Arlette whispered.

Georgina chuckled. " All the better. Can you begin work now ? All right ; there's the typewriter, get it ready. The bear will be here in a minute."

Courleville entered with a self-important air. " Ready to work ? Good. Here is my first act. Don't make any mistakes ; remember that you are copying one of my plays. The manager of the Porte St. Martin wants it immediately. What hours can you work ? "

" From nine until eleven, monsieur, and from three to six in the afternoon."

" Very well." He turned, and Arlette said to his retreating back : " And the title of the play, monsieur ? I do not see it here."

He paused, crossing his hands on his stomach, in the pose of a man thinking profoundly.

" I beg your pardon, monsieur. I have found it now. ' Love Wins.' " The words were traced lightly in pencil on the margin of the written manuscript, as though done in a moment of absent-mindedness.

" What ! " he said, startled. " Oh, no. That is not the title of the play. I will decide upon one later."

" I think this is a beautiful title," said Arlette.

" Yes. Oh, yes. But not quite what I want. No, I will not use it," Courleville replied, and returned to his study.

ARLETTE slammed back the carriage of the machine and put her hands against her cheeks to cool them. " The beast ! " she said, between her teeth, and attacked the keys as though they were enemies.

At eleven o'clock she hurried home to Robert, who sat sullenly staring at a criss-crossed sheet of new manuscript. Pretending not to notice his coldness, she talked brightly while she put away her coat and hat, describing everything she had seen, until Robert became interested in spite of himself.

" And how does he begin the first act ? "

" Oh, he has found it easier to leave it as it was, simply copying it in his handwriting. He has changed the names and made the godfather the family doctor," she explained, laughing so gaily that he could not help smiling. But laughter, the solvent of so many troubles, could not destroy the shadow between them.

Arlette had finished the third act and begun on the fourth, yet nothing had happened to keep her hope alive. She had been unable even to guess where Courleville kept Robert's manuscript. Her face grew thinner, and beneath her eyes appeared shadows of her restless nights and miserable days. On the fifth morning Robert forbade her to go out ; she reminded him of his promise and defied him. The storm ended in pale sunshine ; Robert allowed her to go to work, and she promised that if nothing decisive occurred that day she would not go again.

" Who knows what may happen to-day ? Something must happen—it must ! " she repeated, as she began to work. Presently she heard voices from Courleville's study, and in a second her heart stopped, leaped, and began to beat loudly. She put one hand against it and stood up, leaning forward, listening. The phrases she heard told her that the manager of the Porte St. Martin and a journalist from *Le Gaulois*, the great Paris newspaper, were there, were separated from her only by a closed door. They were talking about the new play, Robert's play.

She thought of breaking in upon them and telling them that it was his. They would not believe her ; she had no proof. She thought of breaking open the locked cabinets beside her and searching them desperately for Robert's manuscript. Twenty mad plans raced through her mind, and she knew that all were futile. She sank back in her chair, biting her lips, and the door opened.

" How much have you finished, mademoiselle ? " Courleville demanded, entering with a self-satisfied smile.

" I am doing the third scene of the fourth act," she answered, in a stifled voice.

" Good ! " Courleville turned to the manager, a little man, round and plump as a robin. " Suppose I read to our friend from *Le Gaulois* the final scene that you like so much ? "

" By all means," said the manager. " That will give him a clearer idea for his article announcing the play. Will it not, my friend ? "

" Indeed, yes," the journalist agreed, stroking his moustache and looking down with respectful admiration at Arlette.

" It is a pity that I am somewhat exhausted to-day from overwork " said

Courleville. "I am afraid I cannot give the full value to the scene, but——"

Arlette rose. "Monsieur, if you would permit me—I can read it. I know the play by heart. It is so beautiful, so beautiful! It would give me the greatest pleasure——" Her slim hands finished the sentence with an imploring gesture.

Georgina, ushered into the room by the valet, stopped amazed, and then gallantly seconded her sister. "Indeed, she reads like a great comedienne!" she exclaimed with enthusiasm.

"You flatter my play, mademoiselle," said Courleville. "Indeed, you embarrass me. Let us hear you read the scene, and if you do it as well as Mlle. Georgina promises I will give you another hundred francs."

"And I will give you a part in the play," said the manager, smiling.

'And I an article in *Le Gaulois*," added the journalist, joining in the laughter.

ARLETTE stood trembling while they settled themselves in chairs. She was white, and the manuscript fluttered in her stiff fingers. Courleville struck three times on the table with a paper-cutter, and she drew a deep breath.

"You know the title," she said, and pronounced it in a clear, steady voice: "'Love Wins.'"

"No, no!" exclaimed Courleville. "I told you not to use that."

"Too bad! It's a splendid title for the play," the manager protested.

"Very suggestive," said the journalist.

"But I tell you I won't have that title!" cried Courleville. The two men expressed, with glances of apology, their respect for the dramatist's authority. "Well, mademoiselle, go on."

"I will read you the cast of characters," Arlette resumed. She began firmly to read, when Courleville bounded from his chair.

"What's that?" he cried. His upraised fist still held the paper-cutter, and his face was so furious that the two men rose quickly.

"That," said Arlette, "is the play written by Robert d'Ormange, 'Love Wins,' the play you tried to steal. I am Mme. d'Ormange, my husband is Assistant Professor of Literature at the Lycée Concordet. He brought this play to you six weeks ago, and you—you thought you had stolen it! I came here to save it, and I have succeeded."

Courleville, strangling with anger and fear, clutched the journalist's arm. "She lies!" he said to the dramatist. "She lies!" he repeated to the journalist.

"No, gentlemen, I am not lying. If you want to see the face of a liar, look at that man." The two men looked, and hastily looked away. "My husband trusted him with his play, his play that cost him two years' work to write. See what that man wrote him." She searched feverishly in her purse and found the letter. The journalist held out his hand for it, and he and the manager read it together.

"MONSIEUR,—*I have read with pleasure 'Love Wins.' There are good bits in it, very good bits indeed, but . . .*"

The two men looked at each other, then continued to read. Courleville had collapsed in an arm-chair, stammering words to which no one listened. The journalist folded the letter and Courleville reached for it.

"Pardon, monsieur, that letter belongs to Mme. d'Ormange," said the journalist, bowing respectfully as he gave it to her. "I trust that you will allow me to have it again if that should be necessary, madame?" he said.

"Madame," said the manager, quickly, in a conciliatory tone, "there must be a way to arrange this matter without—ah—without publicity. M. Courleville's wide reputation as a dramatist—we have produced many of his plays—I beg you, madame, to consider the consequences, the calamity——"

Arlette turned to Courleville, her anger melting in pity before the spectacle of the man, dishevelled, his dignity lost, every semblance of self-respect wiped from him by terror. "Will you, monsieur, give me back my husband's manuscript?"

Courleville, without replying, unlocked a cabinet and handed her the sheaf of pages.

"Be calm, madame, and believe that M. Courleville and I are your friends," the manager urged. "I received the play from M. Courleville, but it seems to me that it would be simple to arrange a contract in your husband's name. You are not only a charming, but an intelligent woman, madame; you will understand the situation. Will you make an appointment for your husband, to-morrow at three o'clock in my office?"

"Perhaps," said Arlette, "you will be good enough to call and make the appointment with my husband himself?"

"With pleasure, madame," said the manager, bowing to the bright-eyed, flushed young woman who stood erect before him. When he lifted his head he saw Arlette sobbing and laughing in Georgina's arms, while Georgina, plumes awry, supported her and shed tears on her rumpled hair. The manager exchanged a look with the journalist, motioned to Courleville, and the three men solemnly retreated to the study.

"Women beat everything," said the manager, lighting a cigar.

(Another story by Madame Bernhardt will appear in an early number.)

OUR PRINCE CHARMING

A Character-Study of The PRINCE of WALES

by E. T. Raymond

(Author of "Uncensored Celebrities," etc.)

The accompanying photographs, which were presented to the Prince during his recent Colonial Tour, were kindly lent by His Royal Highness to THE STRAND MAGAZINE for the purpose of illustrating this article.

I HAPPENED to meet the other day a person of some consequence who was with the Prince of Wales in Australia, and he talked, in quite human and uncourtly kind, of the impression the Prince made wherever he went.

Now, these "young democracies," as Mr. Lloyd George loves to call them, are perhaps as hard a test as any of the power of Royal fascination. Here in the old country we love a lord, and therefore still more the super-lord called a prince. In America lords and princes are still more regarded because the good Republican feels a thrill of delicious wickedness in enjoying his debauch of title-worship. The sentiment is akin to the fearful delight of the schoolboy in breaking bounds, and to the sense of satisfaction the most moderate drinker feels in breaking the law of a Prohibition country.

But in the British Dominions neither instinct exists. Our love of prescription is

unknown. Australians think of man as man, and of a king as only a crowned man. Their sense of democratic equality is less defined than that of the American. But it is a deeper and more imperious instinct.

Now it happened that the Prince was to visit a certain small place in Australia where this feeling, never absent in the great towns, but there diluted with urban tolerance and common sense, reigned with rather irrational force. It was a "Republican" township—not that it had any notion of setting up a Republic; Australian Republicanism is not a political creed, but a moral atmosphere. The people had no prejudice against the Prince as an individual. But they wanted to show him that as a prince he could not expect to turn the heads of good Australian democrats. In London the guinea's stamp was all-important; here men were men for a' that, and Jack was not only as good a man as Lord John, but much better. All this was known to the Prince's party. Nothing serious, of course, was expected, but the probability of some uncourtly demonstration on the part of the rougher element of a place containing no very smooth features had been fully discounted.

When the train drew up to the station it was at once apparent that such expectations of trouble were justified. The appearance of the crowd was distinctly "tough"; its demeanour was decidedly disrespectful. But in ten seconds the Prince had conquered; in ten minutes he had subjugated; in a quarter of an hour, to quote my informant, the whole township was "feeding out of his hand"; and when his train left there was not a sound heart or throat in the place.

And yet my informant could not remember any one definite thing the Prince had done—no one thing that stood out in relief against the vast dim background of chats, speeches, and hand-shakings across a whole continent. The whole incident was as simple as a miracle and as inexplicable The Prince was like Cæsar in the passive. He came, was seen, and overcame.

IT is curious how completely one of the most important political facts of the time is taken as a matter of course. The enormous popularity of the Prince of Wales is in sober truth such a fact. The other day I heard a responsible statesman say, in private, and with no motive but the simple assertion of what he believed to be the truth, that he counted the personality of the Prince as the greatest existing asset of the British Empire. Certainly it is a not inconsiderable safeguard in the present, and a great hope for the future. But we accept it much as we accept a fine summer day, without thought of the dank misery that might have been; there it is, and we assume that so it must be.

Yet in reality the thing is a psychological mystery, if not a psychological miracle. History affords no parallel to the moral conquest achieved by this slim, fair, handsome young man who, two years ago, was little more than a name and a newspaper photograph for the majority of his father's lieges. To-day his personality is felt more widely than that of Augustus, and as intensely as that of Pericles. No earlier Prince of Wales ever created such a legend. The legend of Prince Hal was created for him, and the other Princes of Wales, by their want of colour, forbade even the possibility of a legend being created. Even the late King Edward only achieved in late life his full conquest of the people; his earlier years were overshadowed by the personality of his mother.

The phenomenon, however, is not only unique. It is also not a little puzzling when we consider how arbitrary is the favour of the multitude, and also how the minority always tends to resent the judgments of the majority. The crowd generally cares not a brass button for the heroes of the clubs and salons. The clubs and salons usually disparage the idols of the crowd. But the Prince's empire is as complete over the crowd as over the coteries, and over the coteries as over the crowd.

Whence this power of being, not all things to all men, but the same potent thing to the most widely differing individuals? The power is without question; to him who doubts, *circumspice* is a sufficient reply. The charm of the Prince is felt by grave statesmen, by languid men of fashion, by stuffy philosophers and fluffy "flappers," by ancient dowagers and young working-men.

I have heard some talk about "Press booms," "toadyism," "British snobbery," and so forth, but always from people who have, for some reason or other, not yet come within the range of the Prince's influence. Those who have seen him in the flesh, were it only from a window in the Strand, may have all kinds of inadequate explanations of the fact. They may talk the usual commonplaces about "magnetism," "subtle charm," "personality," and so forth, which is only an elaborate way of saying: "I don't know the reason, but *feel* it incumbent on me to pretend." But of the fact itself they are quite certain.

Youth is not a sufficient explanation; youth is not always a centre of enthusiasm. Let each of us run over the list of his private acquaintance and reckon up the number of men of twenty-six whose presence yields pure delight. Still less is snobbish regard for rank the secret. No doubt we are all snobs at heart; no doubt every one of us would like,

as Thackeray put it, to be seen walking down Pall Mall with a duke on each arm.

Still less is "tact" an explanation; tact is a poor, shallow, superficial thing, meant for superficial use, a sort of social ointment for thin-skinned people; a necessary ingredient, perhaps, in the character of a man or woman of the world, but no passport to the affection of the flimsiest son of Adam. Mankind in the mass is not flimsy; it is solid and real, and only responds to solid reality. Something widely different from the pinchbeck imitation of geniality, something altogether more elemental, is needed to reach the universal heart.

It seems a sure instinct which has led so many people to go to the fairy-tale for an inspiration, and dub the Heir to the Throne "Prince Charming." The title has no doubt been bestowed in an unmeaning way, but there is a meaning in it. Those who speak of "Prince Charming" are "warm," like the blindfolded player in a nursery game who gets near the secret without being aware of it.

The Prince of Wales at Launceston, Tasmania.

The point is not the obvious one that the Prince is a charming young man who happens to be of the Blood Royal. It is rather, I think, that he is so happily constituted that, while nobody forgets that he is a prince, nobody remembers that he is an "august personage."

This may seem a dark saying. But there is all the difference between a prince who is a prince *tout court* and a prince who is also an august personage. The one belongs to all legend and all literature, and a child shall know him; the other belongs to the Court Circular, and a West-end tradesman shall seek to get his arms over the shop-front. It is the difference between an old Knight Errant and the newest K.B.E. The prince charms us in the nursery; we have got to know about a great many prosaic things — income-tax and rate collectors and the American exchange — before we realize the existence of august personages. The prince is cousin german to Dick Whittington and his cat; the august personage belongs to the same scheme as the latest Lord Mayor and his turtle.

Let us see how it works out in the fairy tale. The Prince, we know, goes riding alone in the forest till he comes across the enchanted palace; he kills the wizard, or the giant, or the dragon, or the evil genie, with his own good sword; he wakes the Sleeping Princess with his own hearty kiss, takes her back on his own horse, and lives his own life with her happily ever afterwards.

Now an august personage could do none of these things. He could not stir out without due equerries (covered with medals), who know all about drag-hunts but nothing about

dragon-hunts. Even if the august personage found the Sleeping Beauty, he would hardly know what was really the matter with her: the Court Physician would only mystify him with a bundle of bulletins to the effect that "the condition of Her Royal Highness remains unchanged." As for kissing her, such a breach of etiquette would be unthinkable. And if all the difficulties were surmounted somehow, and the Court Physician were at last able to announce that the Sleeping Beauty had got up, "materially benefited by a sound sleep," and was "taking nourishment freely" (which is Court-physicianese for cold chicken and champagne), even so there would be no romance in the wedding. The august personage would have to get the Prime Minister, or the Foreign Secretary, or the Lord President of the Council, or somebody, to arrange matters for him.

Now the Prince is a prince in the essential fairy-tale sense. He is, of course, not at all likely to go off in quest of sleeping beauties in enchanted palaces. He is a very modern person, and is perfectly aware that there are no sleeping beauties now; the modern beauty is quite painfully wide-awake. But he has the fairy-tale prince's way of being human, and so humanity feels itself flattered in him. We all have deep in us the notion of a golden age; we like to think what man might be if he never had to do any mean things to keep the pot boiling. That is the secret of the popularity of the fairy-tale prince; it is, much more than snobbery, the secret of our love of a lord. Since we cannot all live in the golden age, we enjoy the enjoyment of it by a few, and watch them much as we do the actors in a play, without the smallest envy of the splendid time they seem to be having.

The Prince giving her son's decoration to a bereaved mother at Sydney, N.S.W.

EVERY great personage is popular in some degree who takes his greatness in a spirit, not of condescension, but of fellowship, regarding it as something belonging, not merely to himself, but to everybody. The Prince seems by instinct to have this conception of his position. He wears his rank as a garment, and not as a shell. It is his, and not he its. He does not go about, so to speak, in a diving-bell, taking his own atmosphere with him, but is not only ready, but eager, to get on human terms with everybody.

It would, of course, be affectation to suggest that everything the Prince does is a pleasure to him. He would not, were it not his business, travel thousands of miles in Colonial railway trains, stopping at every township large enough to nourish a civic dignity, in order to listen and reply to "loyal and dutiful" addresses. He has no absorbing interest—what healthy young man could have?—in oldest inhabitants, remarkable citizens, phenomenal babies, provincial mayors, local town halls, statistics, aldermen, and workmen's dwellings. But he is gifted with a marvellous appetite for life in general, which prevents him being bored to extremity by the duller phases of it; he possesses a lively sense of humour, which gets him cheerfully through many appalling inflictions; and he has a quite genuine delight in the simple act of giving pleasure.

His attitude to the crowd is quite unaffectedly this: "How very ripping of you to be so glad to see me." By his mere smile this feeling, and even the carelessly sincere slanginess of its expression, is communicated to the people with a swift certainty that the most luminous eloquence could not convey. There is, I am told, a kind of furnace in which heat "reverberates" from one cell to another, so that the total is far greater than the sum of all the individual cells would be. Something of that kind operates in raising the moral temperature wherever the Prince goes. He makes people glad to see him; they make him glad to see them; his stimulated gladness re-stimulates theirs; and so the action and reaction goes on until a white heat of enthusiasm reigns on the one side, and on the other what would be a dull duty has become a vivid and real pleasure.

King Edward's method was quite different. He was consciously diplomatic. His way of winning a Radical stalwart like the late Mr. Mundella might really be called tactful; it was, at any rate, deliberately thought out. It succeeded by giving the person noticed an intense consciousness of the honour done him. The Prince of Wales would not work like that. If the task were set him of con-

ciliating, say, a violent Sinn Feiner or an uncompromising Bolshevist, he might, perhaps, lie awake half the night thinking of a formula. But the formula would not be used when the time came. The diplomatic approach would be forgotten; instead, there would be something like "How jolly decent of you to come," and the two would be talking at once in the humanest way.

The difference is explained, not so much by temperament — for the Prince strikingly recalls his grandfather in many ways — as by training. King Edward was brought up "carefully" in a sense now obsolete. There was a barrage of moral antiseptic between him and other youth. Even his course of reading was prescribed for him by heavy tutors. He was surrounded by a freezing etiquette. It was only after middle age that he was allowed to smoke when in his mother's houses. In such conditions it was natural that, with all his geniality, there was ever a sense of a boundary which affected people's thoughts as well as their conduct. He was an exceedingly good-natured King, but very much the King.

The Prince, in one sense, has been no less carefully brought up. But his education, while retaining all the solid Victorian virtues, omitted the Victorian extravagances. He has mixed freely with the world. At Oxford he was an undergraduate like other undergraduates. There is a story of a reverential American who penetrated to Magdalen to gaze on the "abode of Royalty," and could not understand the "Pragger Wagger, third staircase on the right" of the first man he addressed. He was better contented when the wicked young man, scenting an innocent, pointed out a great building as the "Royal residence," and volunteered the information that the deer on the other side of the bridge had been "specially imported from the Pyrenees" for His Royal Highness to hunt. Our cousins will never quite understand us.

H.R.H. replying to an address of welcome during the Australian tour.

The great lesson of Oxford, how to get on with men, was, of course, improved by those years in France during which, in the Prince's own words, he "found his manhood." Everybody knows how he pestered Lord Kitchener to let him go out, in any capacity, and how Lord Kitchener, asked not to consider his life of more value than anybody else's, replied, "I am not worrying in the least about whether you will be killed; the trouble is that you might be taken prisoner."

When at last he went it was to stay. Stories came back from the front of the pleasant, boyish figure in khaki, recognized here and there—stories that told of a full measure of cool pluck, good fellowship, and good-nature, with just the proper tincture of "the devil." Then he was heard of further afield; the nation had a glimpse of him as an unofficial Ambassador in Italy, there conquering all hearts. But it was not until after the Armistice that the Prince became a clearly-defined national figure.

His first public appearance was a revelation. The nation's memory was of a shy, fair-haired lad, very uncomfortable in the gaze of his father's subjects. Its consciousness was now of a figure still boyish, but with an easy dignity and cool self-possession, and withal a shrewd understanding of men and things. The Prince's bearing was modest, but in no sense timorous—the bearing of a man who knows himself, and therefore is not likely to be much out with regard to others. The stripling of 1914 had indeed "found his manhood."

To be a man—to be, that is, certain of the one or two matters that really count, to have a "middling tight grip of the handful of things that one knows"—is the surest way to get on terms with other men, of whatever condition. The Prince was found to be unappalled at twenty-five by all sorts of things that people of fifty, who have not yet learned

quite to be men, find appalling. He was unafraid of the imminent deadly speech. He could face a bevy of young nurses without a tremor. He could exchange laughing sallies with a crowd of working men, without losing his dignity or offending theirs—and the working man has a vivid sense of his own dignity. To be a man in the full sense means being at home with all that is human, and in that sense the Prince is in the fullest degree manly.

His success in all public functions was the more remarkable because he is by no means destitute of "nerves." At first his calm concealed a good deal of genuine stage fright, and he has not yet reached the point of facing an audience without a shade of self-consciousness. His busy fingers, fiddling with his sword hilt, his tie, his top-hat, the lapel of his coat, or what not, tell their own tale. He still feels the strain of the formal ceremony, and is at his happiest when it is all over, and Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothesay, Earl of Chester, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, and Great Steward of Scotland can get into the loosest "civvies" and become the plain "David" he is to all his family.

But it is only when his interest in human things is not engaged that this diffidence really troubles him. The moment the time comes for any kind of action he becomes himself again. He is intensely modern in his love of crowds, machinery, things that live or move. The zest of doing is in his veins, when he walks it is at a rattling pace; when he motors he likes to get all there is out of a car; he dances the most strenuous modern dances in the most strenuous modern style; and his sport is the hard, exacting, concentrated sport of the modern—squash rackets is a typical favourite—rather than the leisurely expansive field sport of the old aristocrat.

THE PRINCE has, too, all the modern interest in "shop." "Shop" was the last word in vulgarity in the days when the social ideal was to do nothing gracefully. Judged by the standards of a hundred years ago, the Prince would be hopelessly lacking in princeliness; to-day his vivid concern in all men do is a link of measureless value between him and the nation.

Knowing his own job fairly well already, intent to know it as well as it can be known, he is full of sympathy and interest regarding other men's jobs. He will watch machinery with a fixed intentness sometimes embarrassing to the managers of his time-table. He is intensely interested in the fairy-tales of science and the wonders of industry. He wants to know the reason of all that is happening around him, and when he disapproves of the way things are being done he does not hesitate to point out the fault. Usually he does so with calm decision, but there are occasions on which the quick temper inherited from his grandfather shows itself, to the perturbation of officials who have failed to grasp the meaning of the new princeliness.

For, modest as the Prince is—and his anxious inquiries of the experienced whether he did the right thing in the right way on this occasion or that sufficiently testify to his want of foolish self-sufficiency—he has plenty of character. It is at bottom the character of his House, which has never lacked decision. But that character has been profoundly modified by a wise education and early contact with the wholesomest outside influences. The good side—the strong sense of duty, the fidelity to engagements, the almost religious conception of responsibility—remains; of the side not so good, which for a century at least kept alive the sense of something wanting in the New Monarchy which was present, with all its faults, in the Old, no trace is visible.

The Prince's great-grandmother, grandfather, and father have all helped in their various ways to break down that barrier between Crown and people which was erected when Dutch troops first mounted guard in Whitehall. It is his splendid business to bring back to England the vivid sense of a leadership (none the less real because it is spiritual) that is independent of Ministers and ballot-boxes—a leadership that shall not conflict with, but supplement, the ordinary machinery of government.

For that splendid business no prince could be better fitted, and the wisest heads of the country watch his progress with a feeling that he is steadily advancing that truest form of Coalition which shall bind the Monarch and the People—the two powers which have no interest that is not a national interest, the two powers which in the nature of things can be no respecters of persons, the two powers which cannot be flunkeyish, or snobbish, or self-seeking—in a tie of sacramental strength and sanctity.

ANOTHER "ARCHIE" STORY.

STRANGE EXPERIENCES of an Artist's Model

by P. G. Wodehouse

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

"I SAY, laddie!"

Archie spoke plaintively. Sheer amiability had led him to oblige his friend, James B. Wheeler, the well-known artist, by posing for the central figure in a cover which the latter was painting for one of the magazines; and already he was looking back ruefully to the time when he had supposed that an artist's model had a soft job. In the first five minutes muscles which he had not been aware that he possessed had started to ache like neglected teeth. His respect for the toughness and durability of artists' models was now solid. How they acquired the stamina to go through this sort of thing all day and then bound off to Bohemian revels at night was more than he could understand.

"Don't wobble, confound you!" snorted Mr. Wheeler.

"Yes, but, my dear old artist," said Archie, "what you don't seem to grasp—what you appear not to realize—is that I'm getting a crick in the back."

"You weakling! You miserable invertebrate worm! Move an inch, and I'll murder you, and come and dance on your grave every Wednesday and Saturday. I'm just getting it."

"It's in the spine that it seems to catch me principally."

"Be a man, you faint-hearted string-bean!" urged J. B. Wheeler. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Why, a girl who was posing for me last week stood for a solid hour on one leg, holding a tennis racket over her head and smiling brightly withal."

"The female of the species is more india-rubbery than the male," argued Archie.

"Well, I'll be through in a few minutes. Don't weaken. Think how proud you'll be when you see yourself on all the bookstalls."

Archie sighed, and braced himself to the task once more. He wished he had never taken on this binge. In addition to his physical discomfort, he was feeling a most awful chump. As it was mid-winter, the cover on which Mr. Wheeler was engaged was for the August number of the magazine, and it had been necessary for Archie to drape his reluctant form in a two-piece bathing suit of a vivid lemon colour; for he was supposed to be representing one of those jolly dogs belonging to the best families who dive off floats at exclusive seashore resorts. J. B. Wheeler, a stickler for accuracy, had wanted him to remove his socks and shoes; but there Archie had stood firm. He was willing to make an ass of himself, but not a silly ass.

"All right," said J. B. Wheeler, laying down his brush. "That will do for to-day. Though, speaking without prejudice and with no wish to be offensive, if I had had a model who wasn't a weak-kneed, jelly-backboned son of Belial, I could have got the darned thing finished without having to have another sitting."

"I wonder why you chappies call this sort of thing 'sitting,'" said Archie, pensively, as he conducted tentative experiments in osteopathy on his aching back. "I say, old thing, I could do with a restorative, if you have one handy. But of course you haven't.

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I suppose," he added, resignedly. Abstemious as a rule, there were moments when Archie found the Eighteenth Amendment somewhat trying.

J. B. Wheeler shook his head.

" You're a little previous," he said. " But come round in another day or so, and I may be able to do something for you." He moved with a certain conspirator-like caution to a corner of the room, and, lifting to one side a pile of canvases, revealed a stout barrel, which he regarded with a fatherly and benignant eye. " I don't mind telling you that, in the fullness of time, I believe this is going to spread a good deal of sweetness and light."

" Oh, ah," said Archie, interested. " Home-brew, what ? "

" Made with these hands. I added a few more raisins yesterday, to speed things up a bit. There is much virtue in your raisin. And, talking of speeding things up, for goodness' sake try to be a bit more punctual to-morrow. We lost an hour of good daylight to-day."

" I like that ! I was here on the absolute minute. I had to hang about on the landing waiting for you."

" Well, well, that doesn't matter," said J. B. Wheeler, impatiently, for the artist soul is always annoyed by petty details. " The point is that we were an hour late in getting to work. Mind you're here to-morrow at eleven sharp."

IT was, therefore, with a feeling of guilt and trepidation that Archie mounted the stairs on the following morning; for in spite of his good resolutions he was half an hour behind time. He was relieved to find that his friend had also lagged by the wayside. The door of the studio was ajar, and he went in, to discover the place occupied by a lady of mature years, who was scrubbing the floor with a mop. He went into the bedroom and donned his bathing suit. When he emerged, ten minutes later, the charwoman had gone, but J. B. Wheeler was still absent. Rather glad of the respite, he sat down to kill time by reading the morning paper, whose sporting page alone he had managed to master at the breakfast table.

There was not a great deal in the paper to interest him. The usual bond-robbery had taken place on the previous day, and the police were reported hot on the trail of the Master-Mind who was alleged to be at the back of these financial operations. A messenger named Henry Babcock had been arrested and was expected to become confidential. To one who, like Archie, had never owned a bond, the story made little appeal. He turned with more interest to a cheery half-column on the activities of a gentleman in Minnesota who, with what seemed to Archie—who had been the victim of much persecution from his wife's father—a good deal of resource and public spirit, had recently beaned his father-in-law with the family meat-axe. It was only after he had read this through twice in a spirit of gentle approval that it occurred to him that J. B. Wheeler was uncommonly late at the tryst. He looked at his watch, and found that he had been in the studio three-quarters of an hour.

Archie became restless. Long-suffering old bean though he was, he considered this a bit thick. He got up and went out on to the landing, to see if there were any signs of the blighter. There were none. He began to understand now what had happened. For some reason or other the bally artist was not coming to the studio at all that day. Probably he had called up the hotel and left a message to this effect, and Archie had just missed it. Another man might have waited to make certain that his message had reached its destination, but not woollen-headed Wheeler, the most casual individual in New York. Thoroughly aggrieved, Archie turned back to the studio to dress and go away.

His progress was stayed by a solid, forbidding slab of oak. Somehow or other, since he had left the room, the door had managed to get itself shut.

" Oh, dash it ! " said Archie.

The mildness of the expletive was proof that the full horror of the situation had not immediately come home to him. His mind in the first few moments was occupied with the problem of how the door had got that way. He could not remember shutting it. Probably he had done it unconsciously. As a child, he had been taught by sedulous elders that the little gentleman always closed doors behind him, and presumably his subconscious self was still under the influence. And then, suddenly, he realized that this infernal, officious ass of a subconscious self had deposited him right in the gumbo. Behind that closed door, unattainable as youthful ambition, lay his gent's heather-mixture with the green twill, and here he was, out in the world, alone, in a lemon-coloured bathing suit.

In all crises of human affairs there are two broad courses open to a man. He can stay where he is or he can go elsewhere. Archie, leaning on the banisters, examined these alternatives narrowly. If he stayed where he was he would have to spend the night on this dashed landing. If he legged it, in this kit, he would be gathered up by the constabulary before he had gone a hundred yards. He was no pessimist, but he was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that he was up against it.

It was while he was musing with a certain

"'What you don't seem to grasp is that I'm getting a crick in the back.'
'You weakling! Move an inch, and I'll murder you!'"

tenseness on these things that the sound of footsteps came to him from below. But almost in the first instant the hope that this might be J. B. Wheeler, the curse of the human race, died away. Whoever was coming up the stairs was running, and J. B. Wheeler never ran upstairs. He was not one of your lean, haggard, spiritual-looking geniuses. He made a large income with his brush and pencil, and spent most of it in creature comforts. This couldn't be J. B. Wheeler.

It was not. It was a tall, thin man whom he had never seen before. He appeared to be in a considerable hurry. He let himself into the studio on the floor below, and vanished without even waiting to shut the door.

He had come and disappeared in almost record time, but, brief though his passing had been, it had been long enough to bring consolation to Archie. A sudden bright light had been vouchsafed to Archie, and he now saw an admirably ripe and fruity scheme for ending his troubles. What could be simpler than to toddle down one flight of stairs and in an easy and debonair manner ask the chappie's permission to use his telephone? And what could be simpler, once he was at the 'phone, than to get in touch

with somebody at the Cosmopolis who would send down a few trousers and what not in a kit-bag ? It was a priceless solution, thought Archie, as he made his way downstairs. Not even embarrassing, he meant to say. This chappie, living in a place like this, wouldn't bat an eyelid at the spectacle of a fellow trickling about the place in a bathing suit. They would have a good laugh about the whole thing.

" I say, I hate to bother you—dare say you're busy and all that sort of thing—but would you mind if I popped in for half a second and used your 'phone ? "

That was the speech, the extremely gentlemanly and well-phrased speech, which Archie had prepared to deliver the moment the man appeared. The reason he did not deliver it was that the man did not appear. He knocked, but nothing stirred.

" I say ! "

Archie now perceived that the door was ajar, and that on an envelope attached with a tack to one of the panels was the name " Elmer M. Moon." He pushed the door a little farther open and tried again.

" Oh, Mr. Moon ! Mr. Moon ! " He waited a moment. " Oh, Mr. Moon ! Mr. Moon ! Are you there, Mr. Moon ? "

He blushed hotly. To his sensitive ear the words had sounded exactly like the opening line of the refrain of a Tin Pan Alley song-hit. He decided to waste no further speech on a man with such an unfortunate surname until he could see him face to face and get a chance of lowering his voice a bit. Absolutely absurd to stand outside a chappie's door singing song-hits in a lemon-coloured bathing suit. He pushed the door open and walked in ; and his subconscious self, always the gentleman, closed it gently behind him.

" Up ! " said a low, sinister, harsh, unfriendly, and unpleasant voice.

" Eh ? " said Archie, revolving sharply on his axis.

He found himself confronting the hurried gentleman who had run upstairs. This sprinter had produced an automatic pistol, and was pointing it in a truculent manner at his head. Archie stared at his host, and his host stared at him.

" Put your hands up," he said.

" Oh, right-o ! Absolutely ! " said Archie. " But I mean to say—— "

The other was drinking him in with considerable astonishment. Archie's costume seemed to have made a powerful impression upon him.

" Who the devil are you ? " he inquired.

" Me ? Oh, my name's—— "

" Never mind your name. What are you doing here ? "

" Well, as a matter of fact, I popped in to ask if I might use your 'phone. You see—— "

A certain relief seemed to temper the austerity of the other's gaze. As a visitor, Archie, though surprising, seemed to be better than he had expected.

" I don't know what to do with you," he said, meditatively.

" If you'd just let me toddle to the 'phone—— "

" Likely ! " said the man. He appeared to reach a decision. " Here, go into that room."

He indicated with a jerk of his head the open door of what was apparently a bedroom at the farther end.

" I take it," said Archie, chattily, " that all this may seem to you not a little rummy."

" Get on ! "

" I was only saying—— "

" Well, I haven't time to listen. Get a move on ! "

THE bedroom was in a state of untidiness which eclipsed anything which Archie had ever witnessed. The blighter appeared to be moving house. Bed, furniture, and floor were covered with articles of clothing. A silk shirt wreathed itself about Archie's ankles as he stood gaping, and, as he moved farther into the room, his path was paved with ties and collars.

" Sit down ! " said Elmer M. Moon, abruptly.

" Right-o ! Thanks," said Archie. " I suppose you wouldn't like me to explain, and what not, what ? "

" No ! " said Mr. Moon. " I haven't got your spare time. Put your hands behind that chair."

Archie did so, and found them immediately secured by what felt like a silk tie. His assiduous host then proceeded to fasten his ankles in a like manner. This done, he seemed to feel that he had done all that was required of him, and he returned to the packing of a large suit-case which stood by the window.

" I say ! " said Archie.

Mr. Moon, with the air of a man who has remembered something which he had overlooked, shoved a sock in his guest's mouth and resumed his packing. He was what might be called an impressionist packer. His aim appeared to be speed rather than neatness. He bundled his belongings in, closed the bag with some difficulty, and, stepping to the window, opened it. Then he climbed out on to the fire-escape, dragged the suit-case after him, and was gone.

Archie, left alone, addressed himself to the task of freeing his prisoned limbs. The job proved much easier than he had expected. Mr. Moon, that hustler, had wrought for the moment, not for all time. A practical man, he had been content to keep his visitor

shackled merely for such a period as would permit him to make his escape unhindered. In less than ten minutes Archie, after a good deal of snake-like writhing, was pleased to discover that the thingummy attached to his wrists had loosened sufficiently to enable him to use his hands. He untied himself and got up.

He now began to tell himself that out of evil cometh good. His encounter with the elusive Mr. Moon had not been an agreeable one, but it had had this solid advantage, that it had left him right in the middle of a great many clothes. And Mr. Moon, whatever his moral defects, had the one excellent quality of taking about the same size as himself. Archie, casting a covetous eye upon a tweed suit which lay on the bed, was on the point of climbing into the trousers when on the outer door of the studio there sounded a forceful knocking

"Open up here!"

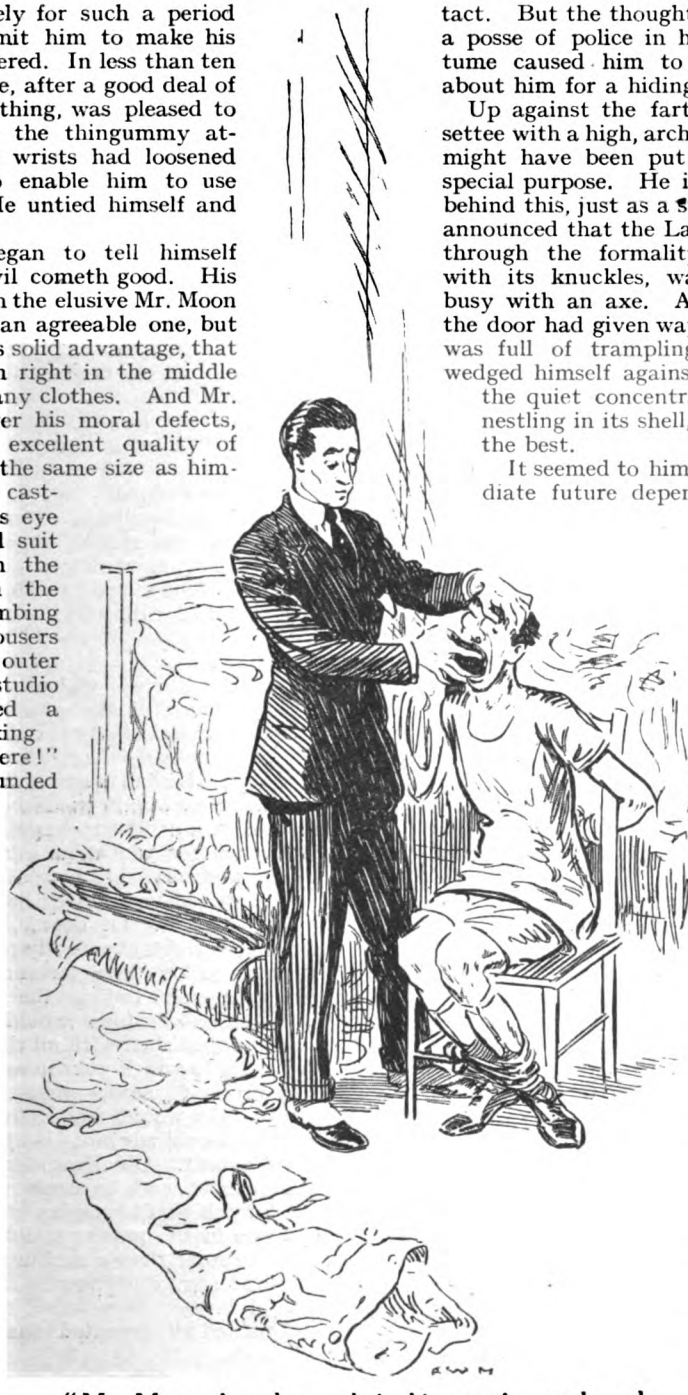
Archie bounded silently out into the other room and stood listening tensely. He was not a naturally querulous man, but he did feel at this point that fate was picking on him with a somewhat undue severity.

"In th' name av th' Law!"

There are times when the best of us lose our heads. At this juncture Archie should undoubtedly have gone to the door, opened it, explained his presence in a few well-chosen words, and generally have passed the whole thing off with ready tact. But the thought of confronting a posse of police in his present costume caused him to look earnestly about him for a hiding-place.

Up against the farther wall was a settee with a high, arching back, which might have been put there for that special purpose. He inserted himself behind this, just as a splintering crash announced that the Law, having gone through the formality of knocking with its knuckles, was now getting busy with an axe. A moment later the door had given way, and the room was full of trampling feet. Archie wedged himself against the wall with the quiet concentration of a clam nestling in its shell, and hoped for the best.

It seemed to him that his immediate future depended for better or for worse entirely on the native intelligence of the Force. If they were the bright, alert men he hoped they were, they would see all that junk in the bedroom and, deducing from it that their quarry had stood not upon the order of his going but had hopped it, would not waste time in searching a presumably empty apartment. If, on the other hand, they were the obtuse, flat-footed persons who occasionally find their way into the ranks of even the most enlightened constabularies, they would undoubtedly shift the settee and drag him into a publicity from which his modest soul shrank. He was enchanted, therefore,



"Mr. Moon shoved a sock in his guest's mouth and resumed his packing."

a few moments later, to hear a gruff voice state that th' mutt had beaten it down th' fire-escape. His opinion of the detective abilities of the New York police force rose with a bound.

There followed a brief council of war, which, as it took place in the bedroom, was inaudible to Archie except as a distant growling noise. He could distinguish no words, but, as it was succeeded by a general trampling of large boots in the direction of the door and then by silence, he gathered that the pack, having drawn the studio and found it empty, had decided to return to other and more profitable duties. He gave them a reasonable interval for removing themselves, and then poked his head cautiously over the settee.

All was peace. The place was empty. No sound disturbed the stillness.

Archie emerged. For the first time in this morning of disturbing occurrences he began to feel that God was in his heaven and all right with the world. At last things were beginning to brighten up a bit, and life might be said to have taken on some of the aspects of a good egg. He stretched himself, for it is cramping work lying under settees, and, proceeding to the bedroom, picked up the tweed trousers again.

Clothes had a fascination for Archie. Another man, in similar circumstances, might have hurried over his toilet; but Archie, faced by a difficult choice of ties, rather strung the thing out. He selected a specimen which did great credit to the taste of Mr. Moon, evidently one of our snappiest dressers, found that it did not harmonize with the deeper meaning of the tweed suit, removed it, chose another, and was adjusting the bow and admiring the effect, when his attention was diverted by a slight sound which was half a cough and half a sniff; and, turning, found himself gazing into the clear blue eyes of a large man in uniform, who had stepped into the room from the fire-escape. He was swinging a substantial club in a negligent sort of way, and he looked at Archie with a total absence of *bonhomie*.

"Ah!" he observed.

"Oh, *there* you are!" said Archie, subsiding weakly against the chest of drawers. He gulped. "Of course, I can see you're thinking all this pretty tolerably weird and all that," he proceeded, in a propitiatory voice.

The policeman attempted no analysis of his emotions. He opened a mouth which a moment before had looked incapable of being opened except with the assistance of powerful machinery, and shouted a single word:—

"Cassidy!"

A distant voice gave tongue in answer. It was like alligators roaring to their mates across lonely swamps. There was a rumble of footsteps in the region of the stairs, and presently there entered an even larger guardian of the Law than the first exhibit. He, too, swung a massive club, and, like his colleague, he gazed frostily at Archie.

"God save Ireland!" he remarked.

The words appeared to be more in the nature of an expletive than a practical comment on the situation. Having uttered them, he draped himself in the doorway like a colossus, and chewed gum.

"Where ja get him?" he inquired, after a pause.

"Found him in here attimpting to disguise himself."

"I told Cap. he was hiding somewheres, but he would have it that he'd beat it down th' escape," said the gum-chewer, with the sombre triumph of the underling whose sound advice has been overruled by those above him. He shifted his wholesome (or, as some say, unwholesome) morsel to the other side of his mouth, and for the first time addressed Archie directly. "Ye're pinched!" he observed.

ARCHIE started violently. The bleak directness of the speech roused him with a jerk from the dream-like state into which he had fallen. He had not anticipated this. He had assumed that there would be tedious explanations to be gone through before he was at liberty to depart to the cosy little lunch for which his interior had been sighing wistfully this long time past; but that he should be arrested had been outside his calculations. Of course, he could put everything right eventually: he could call witnesses to his character and the purity of his intentions; but in the meantime the whole dashed business would be in all the papers, embellished with all those unpleasant flippancies to which your newspaper reporter is so prone to stoop when he sees half a chance. He would feel a frightful chump. Chappies would rot him about it to the most fearful extent. Old Brewster's name would come into it, and he could not disguise it from himself that his father-in-law, who liked his name in the papers as little as possible, would be sorer than a sunburned neck.

"No, I say, you know! I mean, I mean to say!"

"Pinched!" repeated the rather larger policeman.

"And annything ye say," added his slightly smaller colleague, "will be used agenst ya 't the trial."

"And if ya try t'escape," said the first speaker, twiddling his club, "ya'll getja block knocked off."

And, having sketched out this admirably

clear and neatly-constructed scenario, the two relapsed into silence. Officer Cassidy restored his gum to circulation. Officer Donahue frowned sternly at his boots.

" But, I say," said Archie, " it's all a mistake, you know. Absolutely a frightful error, my dear old constables. I'm not the lad you're after at all. The chappie you want is a different sort of fellow altogether. Another blighter entirely."

New York policemen never laugh when on duty. There is probably something in the regulations against it. But Officer Donahue permitted the left corner of his mouth to twitch slightly, and a momentary muscular spasm disturbed the calm of Officer Cassidy's granite features, as a passing breeze ruffles the surface of some bottomless lake.

" That's what they all say ! " observed Officer Donahue.

" It's no use tryin' that line of talk," said Officer Cassidy. " Babcock's squealed."

" Sure. Squealed 's morning," said Officer Donahue.

Archie's memory stirred vaguely.

" Babcock ? " he said. " Do you know, that name seems familiar to me somehow. I'm almost sure I've read it in the paper or something."

" Ah, cut it out ! " said Officer Cassidy, disgustedly. The two constables exchanged a glance of austere disapproval. This hypocrisy pained them. " Read it in th' paper or something ! "

" By Jove ! I remember now. He's the chappie who was arrested in that bond business. For goodness' sake, my dear, merry old constables," said Archie, astounded, " you surely aren't labouring under the impression that I'm the Master-Mind they were talking about in the paper ? Why, what an absolutely priceless notion ! I mean to say, I ask you, what ! Frankly, laddies, do I look like a Master-Mind ? "

Officer Cassidy heaved a deep sigh, which rumbled up from his interior like the first muttering of a cyclone.

" If I'd known," he said, regretfully, " that this guy was going to turn out a ruddy Englishman, I'd have taken a slap at him with m' stick and chanced it ! "

Officer Donahue considered the point well taken.

" Ah ! " he said, understandingly. He regarded Archie with an unfriendly eye. " I know th' sort well ! Trampling on th' face av th' poor ! "

" Ya c'n trample on the poor man's face," said Officer Cassidy, severely ; " but don't be surprised if one day he bites you in the leg ! "

" But, my dear old sir," protested Archie, " I've never trampled——"

" One of these days," said Officer Donahue, moodily, " the Shannon will flow in blood to the sea ! "

" Absolutely ! But——"

Officer Cassidy uttered a glad cry.

" Why couldn't we hit him a lick," he suggested, brightly, " an' tell th' Cap. he resisted us in th' exercise of our jooty ? "

An instant gleam of approval and enthusiasm came into Officer Donahue's eyes. Officer Donahue was not a man who got these luminous inspirations himself, but that did not prevent him appreciating them in others and bestowing commendation in the right quarter. There was nothing petty or grudging about Officer Donahue.

" Ye're the lad with the head, Tim ! " he exclaimed, admiringly.

" It just sorta came to me," said Mr. Cassidy, modestly.

" It's a great idea, Timmy ! "

" Just happened to think of it," said Mr. Cassidy, with a coy gesture of self-effacement.

ARCHIE had listened to the dialogue with growing uneasiness. Not for the first time since he had made their acquaintance, he became vividly aware of the exceptional physical gifts of these two men. The New York police force demands from those who would join its ranks an extremely high standard of stature and sinew, but it was obvious that jolly old Donahue and Cassidy must have passed in first shot without any difficulty whatever.

" I say, you know," he observed, apprehensively.

And then a sharp and commanding voice spoke from the outer room.

" Donahue ! Cassidy ! What the devil does this mean ? "

Archie had a momentary impression that an angel had fluttered down to his rescue. If this was the case, the angel had assumed an effective disguise—that of a police captain. The new arrival was a far smaller man than his subordinates—so much smaller that it did Archie good to look at him. For a long time he had been wishing that it were possible to rest his eyes with the spectacle of something of a slightly less out-size nature than his two companions.

" Why have you left your posts ? "

The effect of the interruption on the Messrs. Cassidy and Donahue was pleasingly instantaneous. They seemed to shrink to almost normal proportions, and their manner took on an attractive deference.

Officer Donahue saluted.

" If ye plaze, sorr——"

Officer Cassidy also saluted, simultaneously.

" 'Twas like this, sorr——"

The captain froze Officer Cassidy with a glance and, leaving him congealed, turned to Officer Donahue.

"Oi wuz standing on th' fire-escape, sorr," said Officer Donahue, in a tone of obsequious respect which not only delighted but astounded Archie, who hadn't known he could talk like that, "accordin' to instructions, when I heard a suspicious noise. I crope in, sorr, and found this duck—found the accused, sorr—in front of th' mirror, examinin' himself. I then called to Officer Cassidy for assistance. We pinched—arrested um, sorr."

The captain looked at Archie. It seemed to Archie that he looked at him coldly and with contempt.

"Who is he?"

"The Master-Mind, sorr."

"The what?"

"The accused, sorr. The man that's wanted."

"You may want him. I don't," said the captain. Archie, though relieved, thought he might have put it more nicely. "This isn't Moon. It's not a bit like him."

"Absolutely not!" agreed Archie, cordially. "It's all a mistake, old companion, as I was trying to——"

"Cut it out!"

"Oh, right-o!"

"You've seen the photographs at the station. Do you mean to tell me you see any resemblance?"

"If ye plaze, sorr," said Officer Cassidy, coming to life.

"Well?"

"We thought he'd bin disguising himself, the way he wouldn't be recognized."

"You're a fool!" said the captain.

"Yes, sorr," said Officer Cassidy, meekly.

"So are you, Donahue."

"Yes, sorr."

Archie's respect for this chappie was going up all the time. He seemed to be able to take years off the lives of these massive blighters with a word. It was like the stories you read about lion-tamers. Archie did not despair of seeing Officer Donahue and his old college chum Cassidy eventually jumping through hoops.

"Who are you?" demanded the captain, turning to Archie.

"Well, my name is——"

"What are you doing here?"

"Well, it's rather a longish story, you know. Don't want to bore you, and all that."

"I'm here to listen. You can't bore *me*."

"Dashed nice of you to put it like that," said Archie, gratefully. "I mean to say, makes it easier and so forth. What I mean is, you know how rotten you feel telling the deuce of a long yarn and wondering if the party of the second part is wishing you would turn off the tap and go home. I mean——"

"If," said the captain, "you're reciting something, stop. If you're trying to tell me what you're doing here, make it shorter and easier."

Archie saw his point. Of course, time was money—the modern spirit of hustle—all that sort of thing.

"Well, it was this bathing suit, you know," he said.

"What bathing suit?"

"Mine, don't you know. A lemon-coloured contrivance. Rather bright and so forth, but in its proper place not altogether a bad egg. Well, the whole thing started, you know, with my standing on a bally pedestal sort of arrangement in a diving attitude—for the cover, you know. I don't know if you have ever done anything of that kind yourself, but it gives you a most fearful crick in the spine. However, that's rather beside the point, I suppose—don't know why I mentioned it. Well, this morning he was dashed late, so I went out——"

"What the devil are you talking about?" Archie looked at him, surprised.

"Aren't I making it clear?"

"No."

"Well, you understand about the bathing suit, don't you? The jolly old bathing suit, you've grasped that, what?"

"No."

"Oh, I say," said Archie. "That's rather a nuisance. I mean to say, the bathing suit's what you might call the good old pivot of the whole dashed affair, you see. Well, you understand about the cover, what? You're pretty clear on the subject of the cover?"

"What cover?"

"Why, for the magazine."

"What magazine?"

"Now there you rather have me. One of these bright little periodicals, you know, that you see popping to and fro on the bookstalls."

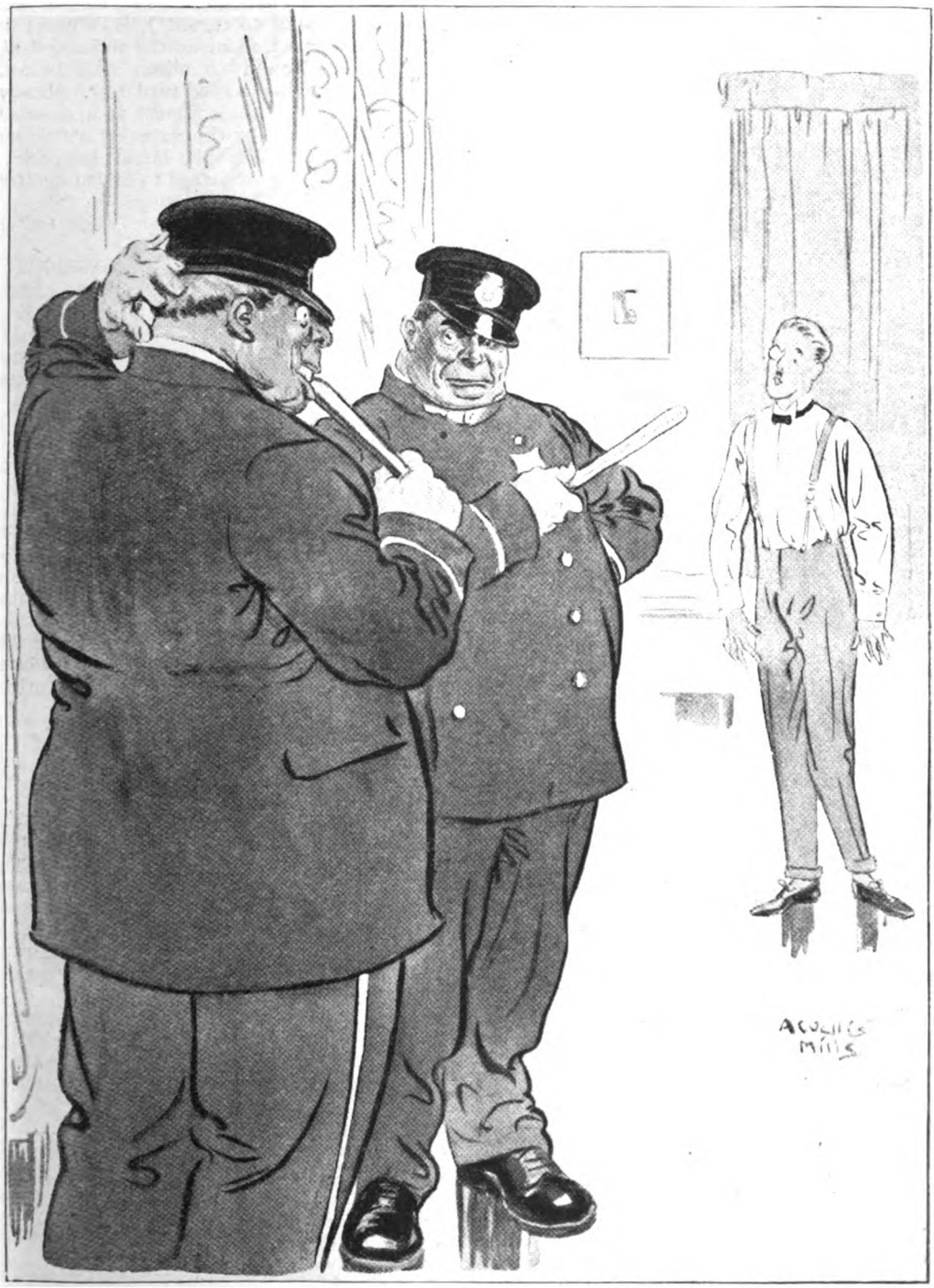
"I don't know what you're talking about," said the captain. He looked at Archie with an expression of distrust and hostility. "And I'll tell you straight out I don't like the looks of you. I believe you're a pal of his."

"No longer," said Archie, firmly. "I mean to say, a chappie who makes you stand on a bally pedestal sort of arrangement and get a crick in the spine, and then doesn't turn up and leaves you biffing all over the countryside in a bathing suit——"

THE reintroduction of the bathing suit motive seemed to have the worst effect on the captain. He flushed darkly.

"Are you trying to josh me? I've a mind to soak you!"

"If ye plaze, sorr," cried Officer Donahue and Officer Cassidy in chorus. In the course of their professional career they did not often hear their superior make many suggestions with which they saw eye to eye, but he had



"Why couldn't we hit him a lick an' tell th' Cap. he resisted us in the exercise of our jooty?"

certainly, in their opinion, spoken a mouthful now.

"No, honestly, my dear old thing, nothing was farther from my thoughts——"

He would have spoken further, but at this moment the world came to an end. At least, that was how it sounded. Somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood something went off with a vast explosion, shattering the glass in the window, peeling the plaster from the ceiling, and sending him staggering into the inhospitable arms of Officer Donahue.

The three guardians of the Law stared at one another.

"If ye plaze, sorr," said Officer Cassidy, saluting.

"Well?"

"May I spake, sorr?"

"Well?"

'Something's exploded, sorr!"

"Something went off with a vast explosion, sending him staggering into the inhospitable arms of Officer Donahue."

The information, kindly meant though it was, seemed to annoy the captain.

"What the devil did you think I thought had happened?" he demanded, with not a little irritation. "It was a bomb!"

Archie could have corrected this diagnosis, for already a faint but appealing aroma of an alcoholic nature was creeping into the room through a hole in the ceiling, and there had risen before his eyes the picture of J. B. Wheeler affectionately regarding that barrel of his on the previous morning in the studio upstairs. J. B. Wheeler had wanted quick results, and he had got them. Archie had long since ceased to regard J. B. Wheeler as anything but a tumour on the social system, but he was bound to admit that he had certainly done him a good turn now. Already these honest men, diverted by the superior attraction of this latest happening, appeared to have forgotten his existence.

"Sorr!" said Officer Donahue.

"Well?'

"It came from upstairs, sorr."

"Of course it came from upstairs. Cassidy!"

"Sorr?"

"Get down into the street, call up the reserves, and stand at the front entrance to keep the crowd back. We'll have the whole city here in five minutes."

"Right, sorr."

"Don't let anyone in."

"No, sorr."

"Well, see that you don't. Come along, Donahue, now. Look slippy."

"On the spot, sorr!" said Donahue.

A moment later Archie had the room to himself. Two minutes later he was picking his way cautiously down the fire-escape after the manner of the recent Mr. Moon. Archie had not seen much of Mr. Moon, but he had seen enough to know that in certain crises his methods were sound and should be followed. Elmer Moon was not a good man; his ethics were poor and his moral code shaky; but in the matter of legging it away from a situation of peril and discomfort he had no superior.

(The concluding story in this series will appear next month.)

Mr. Cray's Adventures

No. 3
Pussyfoot in Mischief

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Illustrated by S. ABBEY

THE meeting between Mr. Cray and Mr. Edward P. Wallin, of Seattle, was a touching and wonderful thing. It took place on the pavement of the Strand, about fifty yards from the entrance to the Milan, the occasion being a gentle stroll on the part of Mr. Cray towards one of the reopened hotels in Northumberland Avenue, which was reputed to possess a wizard in the art of cocktail mixing. They recognized one another about ten yards off, and their greetings were vociferous and idiomatic.

"If it isn't Ed!" Mr. Cray exclaimed, in great excitement. "Welcome to the gay little burg!"

"Joe, old sport, if this isn't bully!" was the prompt and hearty response. "Put it there, my son of the Stars and Stripes. Why, I thought you were handing doughnuts to the boys out in Cologne."

"Demobbed two months ago," was the cheerful reply. "I had twelve months of it steady."

"Gee! but you're a wonder! I guess the Milan's the nearest."

Arm-in-arm, the two men swung along the pavement, Mr. Wallin a somewhat smaller and plumper edition of his old friend. Their faces exuded good-humour and goodwill. Both were filled with the joy of meeting a friend and fellow-countryman in a strange city.

"Ed," Mr. Cray observed, "they've hit it up for us on the other side."

"It's a sure Hades!" the other groaned. "You have to have a pain in your stomach and drop in at the drug store to get a drop of rye or Scotch, and even then you feel like hiding behind the show-case. And I tell you, Joe, to see the boys lapping up soft drinks and getting gloomier all the time is just one over the limit. No one's got used to it yet. We go about kinder dazed."

Mr. Cray glanced at his watch as they reached the Milan bar. He led the way to two easy chairs and beckoned to a waiter.

"Two Scotches-and-soda, Tim," he ordered, "and in a quarter of an hour see that Coley hits us up two dry Martinis with some stick in. Afterwards we'll have a bite of luncheon in the Grill Room."

The programme was approved and carried out. About half-way through the meal Mr. Cray asked a momentous question.

"Say, what's brought you over, Ed?"

Mr. Wallin laid down his knife and fork and groaned. His eyes were fixed with an indescribable expression upon the figure of a woman a short distance away.

"That," he replied. "Her!"

Mr. Cray turned in his chair. A smartly-attired young woman, who had paused upon the threshold looking around the room as though in search of someone, was now approaching their table.

"Why, Mr. Wallin," she exclaimed, as she shook hands, "I had no idea that you were staying here!"

"I'm not," he replied. "I'm just having

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a bite with a friend. I'd like you to know Mr. Joseph P. Cray—Miss Nora Medlicott."

Mr. Cray rose at once to his feet and shook hands with Miss Medlicott. She was very good-looking, her expression was pleasing, and her manner friendly.

"I'm glad to know you, Mr. Cray," she said. "Are you, by any chance, related to Mrs. Georgina Cray, the Vice-President of the Women's Kill-the-Drink League?"

"My wife," Mr. Cray faltered.

Miss Medlicott shook hands with him again.

"I am proud to know you, sir," she declared. "Your wife has done a great work in Oregon."

"Sure!" Mr. Cray murmured, his tone singularly lacking in conviction. "I've been kind of out of things for the last twelve months."

"Mr. Cray has been over in France, doing Y.M.C.A. work," his friend explained.

"Exactly what I should have expected from Mrs. Cray's husband," the young lady declared, approvingly.

"You'll sit down and have some lunch with us, Miss Medlicott?" Mr. Wallin begged.

The young lady appeared to hesitate. She glanced once more around the room.

"I promised to lunch with some of the crowd," she said, "but——"

Her eyes suddenly fell upon the bottle of Scotch whisky which Mr. Wallin had vainly tried to conceal behind a newspaper. Her manner stiffened.

"We'll send this right away," the offender promised, eagerly. "I'm not accustomed to it in the middle of the day, but Mr. Cray here has a touch of rheumatism."

"Touch of what?" Mr. Cray asked, blankly, and received a kick on the shins for his obtuseness.

Miss Medlicott smiled gravely at him.

"You mustn't think I'm over-prejudiced, Mr. Cray," she said, "but I am a great believer in total abstinence. I have many friends, however, who do not share my views, amongst them Mr. Wallin here. I do not, however, sit down at a table, if I can help it, where alcoholic liquors are being consumed."

"We'll soon make that all right if you'll join us," Mr. Cray promised, pushing the bottle heroically away.

"In any case," Miss Medlicott replied, smiling, "there are my friends. Good-bye, Mr. Cray. You will come and call, won't you, Mr. Wallin?"

"Sure!" that gentleman assented, eagerly. "I'll be round to-morrow afternoon."

THE young lady departed. Mr. Cray looked after her regretfully.

"Say, that's a pity, Ed!" he said. "A real stunner, if ever I spoke to one, and a bee in her bonnet like that!"

Mr. Wallin groaned.

"And I love her, Joe," he confided. "I've asked her to marry me six times, and I've come over here because I couldn't bear to think of her in London and these foreign places and me back in Seattle. Sometimes I think I'll have to take the pledge."

Mr. Cray coughed. He found advice difficult.

"It's a serious step, Ed. Men at our time of life ought to be careful how we trifle with our constitutions."

Mr. Wallin helped himself to whisky.

"You're right, Joe," he agreed; "but I do sure love that girl."

"How do you stand with her?" his friend inquired.

"All right, I guess, except for this craze of hers," was the doleful reply. "I can't see that it's her fault. Her father and mother are crazy about it. She's been brought up in the atmosphere."

"She seems a nice girl, too," Mr. Cray sighed.

"If she'd only leave off trying to convert me!" Mr. Wallin murmured.

Mr. Cray finished his whisky-and soda and displayed an interest in the waiter's suggestion as to liqueurs. The matter having been satisfactorily dealt with, he proceeded to the reconsideration of his friend's dilemma.

"Ed," he said, "have you ever tried to convert the young lady?"

"Will you tell me how to start about it?" Mr. Wallin asked, drearily. "The poor girl doesn't know the taste of wine or liquor. Nothing of the sort has ever been allowed in the house since she was born. I'd as soon think of offering her a cocktail as of handing her poisoned chocolates, and I guess she'd feel the same about it."

"What sort of a crowd is she with over here?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"Why, there's her father and mother, a reverend gentleman, two elderly men, and Hiram Croft, the Senator. I guess he's in the same boat that I am."

"A rival, eh?" Mr. Cray observed.

His friend assented dolefully.

"And looks like landing the goods. There they all are, over at the round table."

Mr. Cray studied them thoughtfully

"Lot of deadheads," he declared. "Why, Miss Medlicott is the only live figure there. She don't belong, Ed."

"It's a cruel hobby, that water-drinking," Mr. Wallin remarked. "Seems to link them together, though."

"You mean to tell me that sandy-haired, melancholy-looking dyspeptic is your rival?" his host went on. "Gee! Ed, you ought to put it over on him!"

"Her eyes suddenly fell upon the bottle of Scotch whisky which Mr. Wallin had vainly tried to conceal behind a newspaper. Her manner stiffened."

" He's the big noise when he's on the platform."

" Sure, but the girl isn't going to live with him on a platform! What are they all doing over here, Ed ? "

" Some fool's stunt," Mr. Wallin replied. " They're collecting recipes of temperance drinks. The idea is, when they find one that goes, to form a company to manufacture it. Something that's cool and thirst-quenching in summer, and warm and vitalizing in winter—see the ads. that Hiram Croft is always drawing up."

" A new soft drink, eh ? " Mr. Cray said, thoughtfully.

" That's the idea. They're going round the English manufacturers, and if they can't find anything they're going on the Continent."

" A new soft drink, eh ? " Mr. Cray repeated. " There's money in that, Ed."

" Sure," Mr. Wallin assented, " or Hiram Croft wouldn't be in it. He's some water-drinker, and he cuts out the hard stuff all right, but his nose follows the dollars all the time. Pa and Ma Medlicott know that, too. My little pile isn't much by the side of his."

" Ed " his friend said, firmly, " if you let a whimple-faced, anæmic-looking weed like that rob you of a fine girl like Miss Medlicott, I've sure done with you."

" Do you think I want him to have her ? " Mr. Wallin asked, almost indignantly. " Do you think I've followed her over here for nothing ? Say, you always were a slick sort of chap, Joe. Do you think you could help me ? "

Mr. Cray stretched a pudgy but muscular hand across the table.

" I do think so and I will, Ed," he declared. " Put it there."

THE Hiram Croft-cum-Medlicott party occupied a large round table in a corner of the restaurant. Mr. Wallin and his companion paused before it on their way out.

" I want you all to know my friend, Mr. Joseph P. Cray," the former said, with his hand on Hiram Croft's shoulder. " Mr. Cray has just returned from a year with the Young Men's Christian Association out at the Front."

Mr. Hiram Croft shook hands. The introduction was made general.

" Any relation, may I ask——? " Mrs. Medlicott began, adjusting her pince-nez.

" My friend Mr. Cray," Mr. Wallin interrupted, proudly, " is the husband of Mrs. Cray, the Vice-President of the Kill-the-Drink League."

Mr. Hiram Croft shook hands with him again.

" This is a privilege, Mr. Cray," he said.

Everyone seemed pleased and happy. A chair was brought for Mr. Cray, who looked round at the table with its four goblets of iced water with an inward shiver. There was a good deal of general conversation, which Mr. Cray dexterously brought up to a certain point.

" Mr. Croft," he said, " I am one of those men who before the war had been accustomed to use liquor in moderation."

Mr. Cray, in the eyes of everybody, became a very black sheep indeed. Everybody's manner stiffened perceptibly. It was hard to connect an even moderate use of strong drink with the husband of such an inspired dry prophetess as Mrs. Cray.

" When I took up my post for the Y.M.C.A.," Mr. Cray continued, " I cut it right out. During my year in France not a drop of liquor of any sort passed my lips. Being naturally of a somewhat thirsty disposition, I developed a strong interest in temperance drinks."

" Sure ! " Mr. Hiram Croft murmured, with returning tolerance.

" The subject of temperance drinks," Mr. Medlicott announced, " is one which is at the present time engaging a large share of our attention."

" So I understood from my friend Mr. Wallin here," Mr. Cray said. " I gathered that you were over here looking out for a thoroughly satisfactory recipe for a non-alcoholic beverage."

" Do you know of one, Mr. Cray ? " Miss Medlicott asked, with a smile.

" Madam," the gentleman addressed replied, solemnly, " I do."

" Say, this is very interesting," the Senator remarked. " Can we be introduced to it, sir ? "

Mr. Cray drew his chair a little closer up to the table.

" Mrs. Medlicott and gentlemen," he said, " it is, in a sense, a most extraordinary thing that I should have come into touch with you. I claim to have discovered the most wonderful, refreshing, thirst-quenching, and exhilarating beverage the world has ever known. I hold the recipe of it, and I value that recipe at a good many million dollars."

" Large figures," Mr. Croft murmured.

" If the beverage," Mr. Cray proceeded, solemnly, " stood on the market according to my directions and sold at even a moderate profit, its sales throughout the world would be colossal. But," he went on, " all this is talk. I am prepared to prove my words. I ask you, Mrs. Medlicott and gentlemen, have you yet discovered a satisfactory non-alcoholic beverage ? "

" We have not," Mrs. Medlicott admitted.

" We were inclined to favour a certain brand of dry ginger ale," Mr. Croft observed,

" but we have come to the decision that its after-effects are deleterious."

" A sense of inflation," one of the old gentlemen murmured.

" A tendency towards pains in the lower regions," Mr. Medlicott admitted, frankly.

" In short," Mr. Cray summed up, " you have not yet found what you are looking for. Now, I have brought my recipe back from France, and, although I have not yet sold a single bottle, been near the advertisers, or mentioned it to a soul, I have a plant near London, and I shall be starting out shortly to manufacture on a very small scale. I invite you, ladies and gentlemen, to dine with me in the restaurant of this hotel at eight o'clock next Wednesday night, when my daughter, Lady Sittingbourne, will be proud to be your hostess. You shall then test my beverage, and if you find it what you are looking for, there shall be no question of dollars between us. I will give you the recipe."

Mr. Hiram Croft shook hands with Mr. Cray for the third time.

" Sir," he said, " if you are not led away by the enthusiasm of the discoverer, you are one of the world's benefactors."

" You have spoken, sir," Mrs. Medlicott declared, " as the husband of Mrs. Cray should speak."

" In short," Mr. Medlicott declared, " we accept your invitation."

MR. CRAY received his guests on the appointed day in the sitting-room of his suite. He presented them to his daughter, and as soon as they were all assembled he stood by his little sideboard and addressed them.

" Mrs. and Miss Medlicott and gentlemen," he said, " I can assure you that I feel it a very great honour to entertain you all to-night, but I do not want you to lose sight for a moment of the fact that in a sense this is an educational, and I trust you will find it a deeply interesting, gathering. I am going to disprove everything that has ever been written about alcohol."

" Hear, hear ! " Mr. Hiram Croft murmured.

" Now," Mr. Cray continued, smiling, " you are all doubtless aware of a long-established habit amongst our country-people of taking a cocktail before dinner. However one looks upon it, the habit itself is, without doubt, a pernicious one."

" Deplorable ! " Mrs. Medlicott murmured.

" Unhygienic," one of the old gentlemen echoed.

Mr. Cray signified his unqualified assent.

" Still," he continued, " one function of this cocktail is on the surface a pleasant one. A little party of friends such as the present one meets, a little tired with the day's toil, shy, perhaps, from an imperfect acquaintance with one another, depressed with business worries, physically, perhaps, and mentally weary. Alcohol, in the shape of a cocktail, has its functions upon such an occasion. We have heard the hearty laugh, we have seen the lightning change, the smile of relief, a spirit, perhaps, of good-fellowship, incited by this evil means. Now, my friends, I propose to show you how something of the same sort can be incited without recourse to this bane of our days, alcohol."

Mr. Cray lifted a napkin from the top of a dozen or so of glasses which stood upon a silver salver upon the sideboard. The glasses were filled with a pale amber liquid, on the top of which was floating a small piece of lemon. Very proudly indeed Mr. Cray handed a glass to each of the little company. They all accepted it with a smile of pleased interest.

" Now this," Mr. Cray announced, " is the subject of my first recipe. It is, I claim, pleasant to the taste, stimulating, refreshing, and entirely harmless. It is quite inexpensive to produce, and if you share my enthusiasm for the beverage of which you will presently partake, the recipe for this slight appetizer shall also be yours. Mrs. Medlicott—Miss Medlicott—gentlemen ! "

They all tasted critically, tasted again, and set down their glasses empty. Then they all looked at one another. Mr. Wallin was the only unenthusiastic person.

" I'm afraid I'm all for a dry Martini, Joseph," he admitted ; " although I must admit that this is a pleasant little appetizer so far as soft drinks go."

" Your taste, sir," Mr. Hiram Croft said, severely, " is vitiated. The beverage of which we have just partaken, Mr. Cray," he added, looking hard at the sideboard to see if there was any more, " represents, I consider, a remarkable discovery. I find it exceedingly pleasant and, if I may say so, stimulating, without the noxious after-taste of alcohol."

" I think it is perfectly delicious," Miss Medlicott pronounced.

" Most soothing," Mrs. Medlicott agreed.

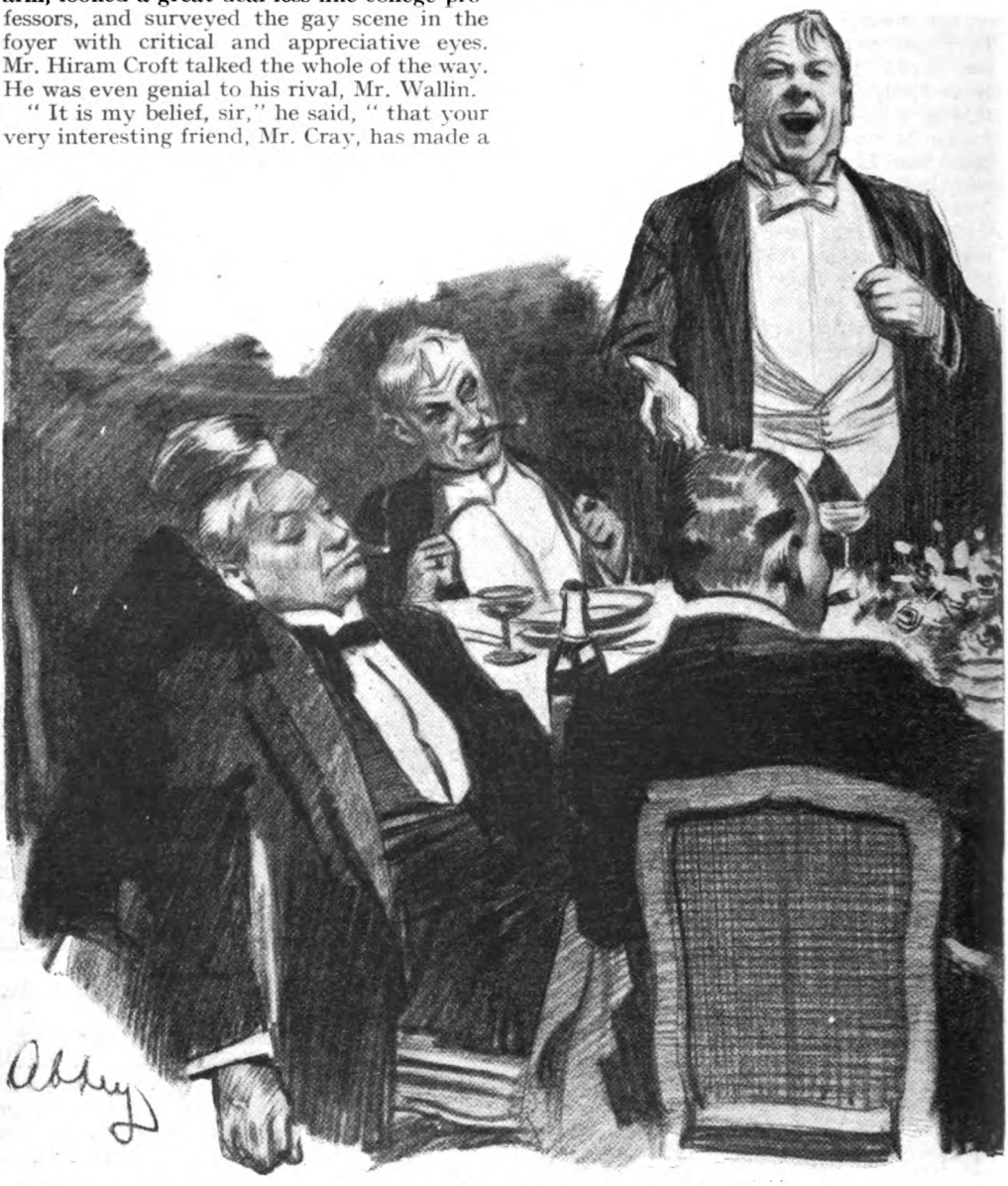
" Mr. Wallin's criticism," Mr. Medlicott said, regarding him steadily, " only proves how a taste for the really good and pure beverages of life may be destroyed by reckless indulgence in alcohol. I consider this beverage which you have offered us, Mr. Cray, a most marvellous discovery. I offer you my congratulations. I am impatient to become acquainted with your other and main discovery."

" I am most gratified," Mr. Cray declared, beaming. " If you will follow me, then, we will now get along to the restaurant."

The little party made their way down the

corridor to the lift and thence to the restaurant. There was not the slightest doubt that the truth of Mr. Cray's contentions was already becoming evident. The two old gentlemen, who brought up the rear arm-in-arm, looked a great deal less like college professors, and surveyed the gay scene in the foyer with critical and appreciative eyes. Mr. Hiram Croft talked the whole of the way. He was even genial to his rival, Mr. Wallin.

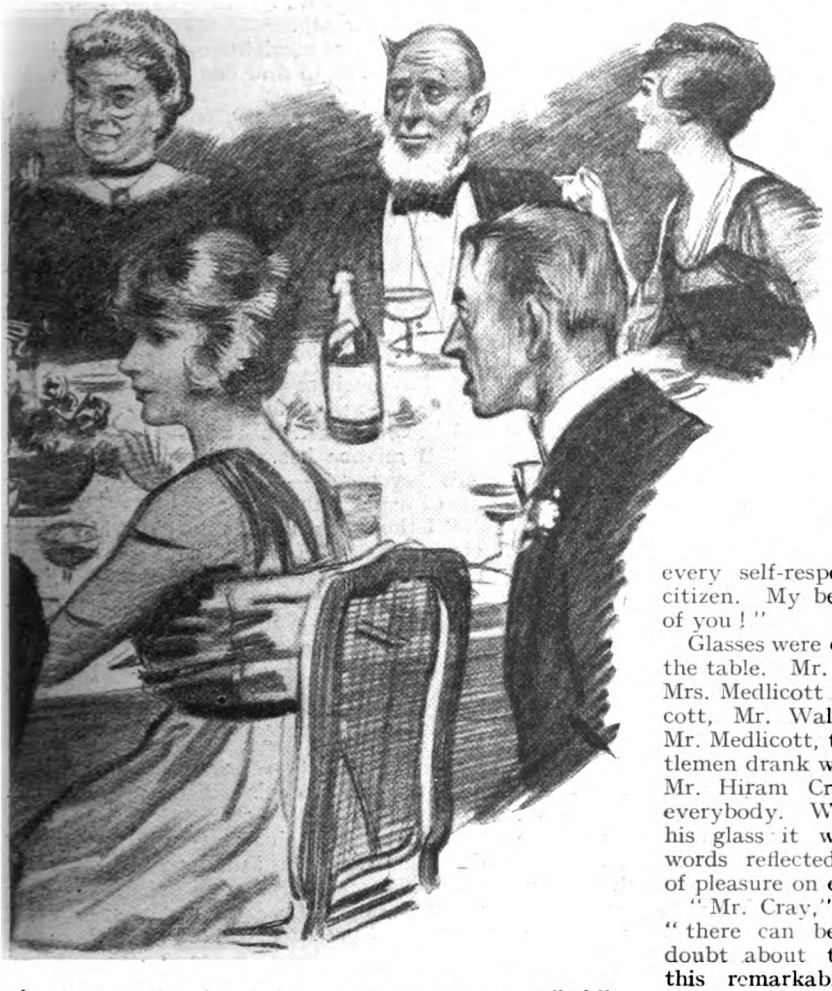
"It is my belief, sir," he said, "that your very interesting friend, Mr. Cray, has made a marvellous discovery. I have suffered from dyspepsia all my life. Meals have been a trouble to me instead of a pleasure. I have seldom anticipated the partaking of food except with dread. To-night I have quite a new feeling. I am hungry. I am looking forward to my dinner. If this sensation lasts I shall hail Mr. Cray as one of the benefactors of his generation, and I shall make it my business, too, as a Senator and a man of some note, Mr. Wallin, in our great country, to see that your friend's discovery brings him the fame to which he is entitled."



"'It was a pleasing custom in my younger days,' Mr. Croft said, 'to sing songs at the conclusion

Mr. Wallin listened with respect to his companion's eulogy. Mrs. Medlicott, who walked at Mr. Cray's right hand, talked to him all the time with marked graciousness.

She did not once raise her pince-nez to gaze with disapproval at the somewhat exotic evening dresses of the other guests in the foyer. Her mouth had lost its severe curve, and she, too, seemed full of pleasurable anticipation. Miss Medlicott, who walked on the other side of their host, was inclined to be a little thoughtful. She, too, however, was in the best of spirits, and a little cry of admiration escaped her lips when, escorted by many bowing waiters, they were ushered to a private room opening out of the main restaurant, in the centre of which was a large table beautifully decorated with great clusters of red roses, and with a little American flag rising from a fancy edifice in the middle. There was a general murmur of interest when, as they sat down, gold-foiled bottles, one to every two persons, were discovered around the table.



of a feast of this description—college songs, generally.'"

"So this is the great discovery?" Mrs. Medlicott said, s[illegible]g. "The bottle presents a most attractive appearance."

"I am glad that it meets with your approval," Mr. Cray replied. "I have instructed the waiter not to open any of it until after the soup, as the contents are slightly aerated."

Mr. Hiram Croft looked a little disappointed. He ate his oysters and swallowed his soup with almost tumultuous eagerness. A little murmur of deep interest escaped from everyone when, with the serving of the fish, a dark-visaged potentate dexterously opened one or two of the bottles and glasses were filled.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Mr. Cray said, "this may be an epoch-making dinner in the history of American temperance. If you approve of this beverage, as I trust you will do, there may soon come a time when it will become a familiar feature upon the sideboard and dinner-table of every self-respecting American citizen. My best wishes to all of you!"

Glasses were clinked all round the table. Mr. Cray drank with Mrs. Medlicott and Miss Medlicott, Mr. Wallin drank with Mr. Medlicott, the two old gentlemen drank with one another, Mr. Hiram Croft drank with everybody. When he set down his glass it was empty. His words reflected the expression of pleasure on everyone's face.

"Mr. Cray," he pronounced, "there can be no manner of doubt about the qualities of this remarkable beverage. I hail you, sir, as one of the greatest discoverers of the age, one of the greatest friends American temperance has ever had."

"Let us drink," Mrs. Medlicott purred, "to Mrs. Cray. What would she not give to be with us to-night!"

"To Mrs. Cray," the Senator assented,

waving his refilled glass, " Vice-President of the Kill-the-Drink League. Also to her worthy husband, Mr. Joseph P. Cray," he added, bowing to his host.

The toast was duly honoured, and the conversation continued on cheerful and optimistic lines. After his first glass Mr. Cray turned to Mrs. Medlicott.

" Madam," he said, " I trust that it will not offend your susceptibilities in any way if Mr. Wallin and I, who you know are not abstainers, take a glass of champagne ? "

Mrs. Medlicott shook her head at him, but her expression, as well as her tone, was kind and genial.

" Why, you must please yourself, Mr. Cray," she replied. " I am thankful to say that I am not a prejudiced woman."

Mr. Cray bowed, and the waiter filled his glass and Mr. Wallin's with champagne of a well-known vintage. Mrs. Medlicott sighed.

" Everyone to his taste," she said, " but it does astonish me, Mr. Cray, that when you have a harmless and non-alcoholic beverage of such marvellous properties as the one which we are now drinking, you should prefer to drink wine and face the after-consequences."

" Wine doesn't disagree with me, madam," Mr. Cray declared, mildly.

Mrs. Medlicott squeezed his arm in friendly fashion.

" Joseph Cray," she said, " I take an interest in you because I know your wife."

Mr. Cray sighed.

" I suppose Amelia has to be in it," he murmured.

Mrs. Medlicott shook her head playfully.

" Why, Mr. Cray," she exclaimed, " you are getting me all confused. Now listen to me, there's a dear man. Statistics—— "

MR. HIRAM CROFT'S sonorous utterance suddenly descended upon them like a mill-stream, sweeping away the froth of lighter conversation. One hand fondly embraced the stem of his wineglass, with the other he beat time upon the table.

" Statistics," he interrupted, " have proved to the conviction of every thinking man the evil and the horror of indulgence in alcoholic beverages of any sort. Mr. Joseph P. Cray here has swept away the last excuse of the wine-drinker. He has provided us with a beverage generous in its qualities, exhilarating in its after-effects, delicious to the palate. This beverage," he continued, looking earnestly at the bubbles in his glass, " has none of the thin acidity of most temperance drinks. It hash none ofsh—I beg your pardon," he said, holding his hand before his mouth and correcting himself with prenatural gravity. " It has none of the thin limpidity of the aerated waters in ge-general use. If I were to search through my vocabulary for a single adjective, or rather epithet, to apply to this wonderful refreshment, I should call it—inspired."

" Bravo ! " exclaimed the two old gentlemen from the other end of the table.

" How eloquent you are, Mr. Croft ! " Miss Medlicott murmured.

Mr. Croft dived for her hand under the table, and very nearly lost his balance. The young lady drew a little farther away.

" What I should like to know," Mr. Medlicott demanded, " is what can alcohol give us that we do not find in this simple beverage ? "

" What indeed ? " Mr. Cray murmured, under his breath.

The Senator straightened his tie, which he was surprised to find had gone round to the back of his neck.

" Mr. Cray," he declared, " is the world's greatest benefactor. He has dug a grave for alcohol, he has signed the doom of hard drinks. You agree with me, gentlemen ? " he asked, leaning over and addressing the two gentlemen with strained politeness.

" Sure ! " they exclaimed, with one breath.

" I am glad to hear that," Mr. Croft said, severely. " For a moment I fancied that you were not in sympathy with our enthusiasm."

" That's where you were dead wrong, then, Croft," one of them replied.

Mr. Croft looked round the table.

" If anyone has anything to say against this beverage——" he continued, with the air of one spoiling for a fight.

" I thought it a little insipid," Mr. Wallin commented. " I was glad to get a glass of champagne afterwards."

" Inshipid ? " Mr. Croft repeated, severely. " Mr. Wallin, you surprise me."

" Not nearly so much as you're surprising me," that gentleman replied. " I haven't seen you look so well or talk so well for ages."

Mr. Croft smiled. He looked steadily at Miss Medlicott's hand, as though meditating another dive. She promptly withdrew it and moved her chair a little nearer to Mr. Wallin's.

" It was a pleasing custom in my younger days," Mr. Croft said presently, as the wonderful repast drew to a finish, " to—er—shing shongs—I beg your pardon—to sing songs at the conclusion of a feast of this description—college songs generally. Can anyone oblige ? "

Everyone seemed willing to oblige at once. Mr. Cray struck the table with his fist, however, and demanded silence for Mrs. Medlicott, and Mrs. Medlicott, interrupted with little bursts of laughter which necessitated her stopping sometimes to wipe the tears from her eyes, warbled a strange ditty in which the moonlight, a coloured gentleman

of amorous propensities, and a chicken seemed inextricably mixed. Mr. Cray roared a buccaneering ditty, and Mr. Croft, in a reedy falsetto, essayed a well-known darky melody. Presently Mrs. and Miss Medlicott retired into the little withdrawing-room opening out from the suite, Mr. Croft, supporting himself by the back of the chair, throwing amorous kisses at the latter's retreating figure. His eyes returned to the sideboard, and rested there with marked satisfaction.

"Two more bottles," he declared. "We'll give thish beverage a thorough tesht, Mr. Cray."

Mr. Cray signed to the waiter. Then he rose to his feet. Miss Medlicott was standing on the threshold of the withdrawing-room, beckoning imperatively to him.

"If you will excuse me for one moment, gentlemen," he begged.

"For one moment, but never a life-time," warbled Mr. Croft. "Come back shoon, old dear."

Mr. Cray approached Miss Medlicott with some apprehension. She drew him inside the little room. Mrs. Medlicott was lying on the couch with her eyes closed, and snoring melodiously.

"Dear host——" Miss Medlicott began.

Mr. Cray saw that the young lady's eyes were dancing with humour, and he felt relieved.

"Will you give me the recipe of your temperance beverage, please?" she said.

"I will if you promise to marry Mr. Wallin," he replied.

She laughed softly.

"He hasn't asked me lately," she said.

"If he asks you to-night?" Mr. Cray persisted.

She looked back into the room. The two old gentlemen were sitting arm-in-arm, telling one another stories. Mr. Medlicott, with a cigar in the corner of his mouth and a beatific expression upon his face, was leaning forward in his chair, listening to Mr. Hiram Croft telling a story in a confidential and suggestive undertone. Mr. Wallin, pink and white and wholesome, was looking a little bored.

"I agree," she whispered.

Mr. Cray drew a paper from his pocket.

"You take four bottles of old champagne, one pint of brandy——" he began.

"No more," she interrupted. "Take my advice and tear it up. Fetch Mr. Wallin."

"Ed," Mr. Cray called out softly, "will you step this way?"

Next month: "The Reckoning With Otto Schreed."

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 90.

"It was a famous victory,"
So Southey says, and we agree.

1. His patronymic: by another name
The actor won his knighthood and his fame.
2. Shorten a Grecian hero, and you find
An Irish island still is left behind.
3. Out of itself 'tis simple agony,
But in itself a charming melody.
4. It is the common burden of us all,
And plundered Peter pays to plundered Paul.
5. To beat a tailless pet what town would boast?
For answer search along the Scottish coast.
6. Alas, my brother! how the ox is pained
To see that in a teacup he's contained.
7. Bombs were his weapons, and he strove to free
From foreign yoke his native Italy.
8. Thus spake the cannibal, prepared to dine
Off your compatriot, oh solver mine!

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 90 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on January 11th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO No. 89.

1.	C	a	T
2.	H	e a l t	H
3.	R	o m	E
4.	I	n n i n g	S
5.	S	c o t	T
6.	T	h u n d e	R
7.	M	a l t	A
8.	A	r a g o	N
9.	S	e c o n	D

NOTES.—Light 1. Care killed a cat. 8. Henry the Eighth, Catharine of Aragon.

"Pettish" is accepted for the "Peevish" light in Acrostic No. 87.

Solvers who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should enclose a stamped addressed envelope with their letters, and he will endeavour to reply.

THREE DROLLS

GEORGE ROBEY,
NELSON KEYS,
and GROCK.

By
A. B. WALKLEY.

MANY hard things are said, and sometimes even thought, about the artistic demerits of our incoherent revues and so-called variety entertainments, and of the drolls who give a certain coherence to the incoherent and unity to the variety. This only shows that the old superstition of an artistic hierarchy still lags superfluous. A revue may be a better work of art than a five-act tragedy in blank verse. The real difference between the new entertainment and the old, or the old-fashioned, is the altered relation of playwright and player. In the old, it was the author that mattered, and the player was his interpreter. In the new, the player, with occasional assistance from the author, interprets himself. Often enough he is his own author, not only interpreting himself, but inventing the material and medium for the interpretation. This makes the task of our drolls at once glorious and onerous. Their talent must be real, fresh, vital, individual—a genuine artistic "value"—or that good-humoured yet inexorable tyrant, the public, will dismiss them with Louis XIV.'s fatal "We are not amused." A richly-endowed temperament, brought to its full power by perfect technique, in complete possession of its resources, dominating its public by natural gift of drollery or wit, or astonishing it by impeccable accomplishment: this is what is demanded, and it is no slight achievement to satisfy such a demand. There are several artistes who satisfy it brilliantly at the present moment. But one must make a choice, and I have selected three: Mr. George Robey, Mr. Nelson Keys, and Grock.

MR. GEORGE ROBEY.

Mr. Robey has a comic face. Why? What *is* a comic face? Bergson asks the question in his essay on "Laughter," connecting it with his general theory of the comic as the mechanical encrusted on the living, and answers that a comic face will present something rigid in its wonted mobility, an ingrained twitching, or a fixed grimace. Mr. Robey gets the something rigid by heavy semi-circular eyebrows, and the fixed grimace is one of surprise. The mouth is flexible and humorous, and often contradicts the wondering fixity of the brows, so that the face seems in two compartments, the pursed knowingness of the lower half "giving away" the round innocence of the upper. But surprise is the dominant expression, and Mr. Robey's whole attitude is one of surprise. He is mildly surprised as Johnny Jones. He is haughtily surprised as Louis XV. He is indignantly surprised at his audience.

NEEDLESS to say, the relation of every droll to his audience is of the last intimacy. It is of the essence of his art to take them into his confidence, to share his good things with them, never to take his eye off them. Here he is at the opposite pole from the serious actor, who must appear totally unconscious of his audience, never speak to them or look at them. The sense of illusion must never be broken. There are cases of half-illusion—Charles Lamb instanced the "artificial" comedy of Congreve and Sheridan—where a certain subconsciousness of the audience on the actor's part may be permissible, or, as

George Robey as an Italian street musician.

Lamb maintained, desirable. But about the droll there can be no doubt. There is no pretence of illusion or half-illusion in his case. He is assuming a part only to act himself. And so he is not to be content with the "artificial" comedian's device of under-lining passages for the audience's especial benefit, as Lamb said Jack Palmer did with the sentiments of Joseph Surface; he must break off the action to address his audience directly. Of this peculiar function of the droll Mr. Robey is an accomplished master. The point is to choose the right moment and to say the right thing. Very often Mr. Robey will say nothing, but will "look volumes." And it is generally a look, as I said, of surprise. Someone in the audience has indiscreetly laughed at a supposed double meaning which Mr. Robey meant in all innocence, and Mr. Robey is surprised, painfully surprised. Mr. Robey is always on the alert for the audience's peccadilloes, always prompt to reprove them with his eyebrows raised in surprise. Sometimes he will give a little start and a severe look, as though to check unseemly laughter in advance—with the result, of course, that

"Have you ever looked at a worm? Have you ever *examined* a worm?"

"As a Red Indian, George Robey wore a plumed head-dress that stood on end when he was shown a rum-bottle."

the laughter is louder than ever. His general demeanour is that of a nervous, sensitive man, worried by an audience of whose taste and tact he can never be quite sure. He has to be ever on the watch to keep them on the right path. At times he openly upbraids them. But always in a tone and with a face of surprise.

Note that in an inferior artiste this attitude, far from provoking roars of laughter, would be resented. You must have conquered your audience, proved your ability to amuse it without fail, before it will grant you the privilege of familiarity. *Prestige* is half the battle. The public know their Robey, and Mr. Robey knows his public.

And, among other things, he knows that they like to hear clearly and to understand what they hear. Mr. Robey takes care that not a word he utters shall fail to reach the remotest corner of the house, and every key-word in a sentence is emphasized as with

Nelson Keys
and the characters he plays in "London, Paris, and New York."

the stroke of a hammer. Indeed, for this quality of hammering out emphatic words I can recall no artiste to equal Mr. Robey save Sarah Bernhardt. But then Sarah gabbled all the little intermediate words, and that Mr. Robey never does. He is not afraid of

A COCKNEY

A SPANISH MUSICIAN.

A JAPANESE JUGGLER.

BEAU BRUMMELL.

repetitions any more than he is of italics. He means, at all costs, to be plain. Thus, someone has called him a "she-worm." This is a novelty, and he ponders over it. "Why she-worm? Why *she*-worm?" Then (to the audience): "Have you ever seen a worm? Have you ever looked at a worm? Have you ever *examined* a worm? Well, it looks like two inches of—nothing. You pat it on the head—and it's ten to one you've got the *wrong end*," etc., etc. This disquisition, read in cold blood, is not deliriously funny. But Mr. Robey's bewilderment at the unfamiliar epithet is obviously so sincere, he has so honest a desire to solve the mystery by considering the anatomy and physiology of the worm, his face of surprise is so much more surprised than usual, that the effect of the passage, as delivered, is highly ludicrous. Highly ludicrous, that is to say, provided you are in the right mood. It would be absurd to go to him in your ultra-fastidious moments, when nothing but the choicest epigrams will serve your turn. You do not gather grapes of thorns or epigrams from Mr. Robey. He addresses a vast popular audience who would simply yawn (and perhaps throw things at him) if he were too clever. Probably he is a wittier man in real life than he ever dares to

be on the boards. There he must be simple, direct, not to say blunt. But his fun is always genuine fun, of its kind. Indeed, genuineness is his chief attraction. His jokes seem to be spontaneous, his attitude and gestures those of the natural man, incapable of dissimulation or disguise. See him shrinking under the eagle eye of the gendarme—shrinking, shrinking in an agony of nervous apprehension, yet with a desperate attempt to appear unconcerned. And just as naturally as he expresses fear of the gendarme he expresses joy over the whisky-bottle, or gratification at the sight of a pretty face. All his emotions are unrestrained, like a child's. Drolls appeal to the child in us. That, though we may not know it (the child in us being instinctive and not self-conscious), is why we love them. And as children like to hear the same stories over and over again, so they like to find the old recognizable badge in their drolls—if it's only a red nose. In Mr. Harry Tate they expect a certain moustache. In Mr. Robey the badge is a certain hat—a shallow bowler, several sizes too small for him—and a semi-clerical frock-coat. He probably " came out " in that garb, and he assumes it whenever he gets the chance. At the same time, he has the gift of fantasy in character costumes. As a Red Indian he wore a plumed head-dress that stood on end when he was shown a rum-bottle. As an Italian street musician he wears a monkey pinned to his coat-tails. Yes, drolls appeal to the child in us, and it is wise to be a child again as often as you can.

MR. NELSON KEYS.

There are many ways of serving the Comic Spirit. No two temperaments could be, superficially, more unlike than those of Mr. Robey and Mr. Nelson Keys. Mr. Robey is stolid, phlegmatic, fond of appearing unmoved amid contrasted agitation on the stage or the storm of laughter provoked by his last joke all over the house. The eyebrows go up, but the man himself stands still. Mr. Keys is mercurial, all vivacity, all " air and fire," here, there, and everywhere, translating himself into a score of different individualities in as many minutes, not one but all mankind's epitome, a human kaleidoscope. Mr. Robey is, like Mr. Wopsle's Hamlet, massive and concrete ; you never lose sight of him in his make-up. Mr. Keys's make-up is often a perfect disguise, so perfect that, until he has opened his mouth and declared himself, you have failed to " spot " him in the stage crowd. But it is not merely a question of make-up. He identifies himself with his assumed character, loses himself in it, *lives* it. In other words, Mr. Keys is a better mimic than Mr. Robey, though it by no means follows that he is a better droll. Indeed, any classification of artistes in some supposed order of merit, whether they are drolls or tragedians, or novelists, or poets, or painters, belongs to the school-boy order of criticism. There is a commercial classification, no doubt, which managers and publishers and picture-dealers cannot afford to ignore, but market values do not enter into æsthetic estimates. Mr. Robey and Mr. Keys have their several publics. The wise, the catholic-minded in humour, will know how to enjoy them both. Let us like what is excellent, no matter what it is : whether it be a tragedy of Sophocles, the wit of Congreve, Mr. George Robey's ironic surprise at his audience, or the mimetic antics of Mr. Nelson Keys. They are all, to borrow one of Mr. Keys's catchwords from " London, Paris, and New York," " awf'ly good."

HE is seen, perhaps at his best, certainly at his most various, in this revue. The catchword quoted, not remarkable in itself, but uttered in a hundred different tones and coming in as a perpetual " refrain " to the quaintest conversational amenities, is from " A Dressing-Room Episode." Mr. Keys, as himself—that is, as the miniature, spare figure in evening dress, with dangling cane and silk hat perched on the back of the head, so familiar in the posters—has strolled into a fellow-actor's dressing-room, evidently after dining a little too well, and inflicts on his friend a series of what in any other man would be tiresome inanities. He praises his friend's performance, but upsets his looking-glass and dislodges his wig from its block—and he incoherently prattles on and on. In any other man, I say, this would be tiresome. But it never tires you with Mr. Keys, his mischief is so impish, his caricature of the importunate visitor abounding in inopportune compliments is so true. Caricature ? Hardly ; say rather criticism.

For I venture to claim Mr. Keys as a fellow-critic. What is the first business of criticism ? Is it not to put yourself in the criticized's place, to adopt his point of view, to recreate his work within yourself ? From that standpoint you proceed to your own critical reserves. Well, Mr. Keys goes through the same process. To represent a character, you must first apprehend it ; but you may apprehend it merely, and then you are the dupe of it. Mr. Keys apprehends it critically, and so represents it as to mark his critical reservations by slightly emphasizing its weaknesses, its absurdities. You laugh—and the chief end purposed is thereby gained—but you feel that you are laughing intelligently, that you have gained an insight into the character you are laughing at. " *Interroge-toi quand tu ris*," wrote Stendhal to his sister. Ask yourself about the quality of your laughter

over Mr. Nelson Keys, and you will find that there is an intellectual element in it, it is never empty laughter. I must not do Mr. Keys the disservice of pretending that he appeals exclusively to the "high-brows"; he appeals to every human being with a sense of fun. But he will always be a special favourite with the people who prefer to season their fun with a little admixture of thought.

This same critical faculty of his, the faculty of commenting on a part in the very way he plays it, is shown in his impersonation of the three lovers, English, French, and American, in the triad of brief scenes illustrating the stock dramatic "motif" of one-woman-between-two-men. The contriver of the scenes (I suppose Mr. Arthur Wimperis) has made each lover ridiculous, and that is all right. But Mr. Keys has marked the international "nuances" of the ridiculous; his English lover, vapouring, romantic (a kind of "Georgian" poet, shall one say?), is as unlike his ecstatic, gesticulating French lover as both are unlike the sentimental "Johnny-get-your-gun" cowboy lover. I cited Stendhal just now. The author of "De l'Amour," who was fond of international contrasts in amorism, would have been delighted with these three presented by Mr. Keys.

Nor do these exhaust his international types. His German, laboriously but unsuccessfully disguised as an Englishman, is an old favourite of his, and a remarkable burlesque it is of the stage Teuton. But his Spanish musician is quite new and more Spanish, you guess, than anything in Spain. You have just seen a real bit of Spain, Laura de Santelmo, a most graceful dancer, and you have noticed how she punctuatest he slow, voluptuous rhythm of the dance by an abrupt toss of the head and sudden stiffening of the body—a sharp *staccato* to interrupt the languid *legato*. To this lovely vision of Spain on the romantic, the Don Quixote, side, as you may say, Mr. Keys furnishes a pendant of Spain on the Sancho Panza side—a darting, whistling, thrumming little figure, pouring out a voluble patter that *sounds* authentically Spanish though it is really Cockney. Whether Mr. Keys is a linguist or not, I haven't the remotest idea; but he is one of those (the late Mr. Evelyn Beerbohm was, notably, another) who have a fine ear for the melody, the pitch, the accentuation of a foreign language, though they may be quite ignorant of its vocabulary. His ear, again, has caught exactly the flat, toneless notes of a Japanese speaking English. His impersonation of a Japanese juggler is (especially when his tricks fail) one of the drollest, and at the same time one of the most accurately observed, things he does.

Grock the Inimitable.

Indeed, this actor's gift of observation should perhaps count first in the long list of his assets—that, and the gift of mimicry, which enables him to reproduce what he has observed. No detail escapes him, and he has the critical *flair* for the right, the characteristic, detail. This is the peculiar talent of the realist; when he is required to present something that he has had no chance of observing he is by no means so happy. Mr. Keys's Beau Brummell, I should guess (for it can only be guesswork for any of us) is no more like Brummell than his companions are like Fox and Sheridan and the Prince of Wales. But he has seen many a Cockney visitor to Brighton, and he must have seen an old white-haired retired admiral, and these two types he reproduces for you in perfection. They bring his bunch of characters in one evening up to ten. As you have seen, no one of the ten is in the least like another, and not one of them is a conventional type, wherein the actor has merely to imitate another actor. I spoke of his observation, but, remember, his impersonations have not only to be true, they have to be funny—and the amount of comic invention he has lavished on them is prodigious.

All this, I think it must be agreed, makes up a remarkable total of temperament, talent,

and art. The blend presupposes an inexhaustible vitality. Obviously, there goes with it a passionate desire to please. The desire is richly gratified. London likes to be thrilled now and then by a serious actor; it enjoys its few comedians; but it goes almost crazed with delight over its drolls. We are all, it has been said, born Platonists or Aristotelians. That may be. But it is certain that we are all born Robeyites or Keysians. And some of us, the luckiest, are born both.

GROCK.

Drollery may range from the meticulously realistic to the extravagantly grotesque. The most extravagant form of the grotesque is what may be called the grockesque. For Grock the inimitable must have an adjective to himself. None but himself can be his parallel. To describe him as a musical clown would be misleading, because it would put him in a class, and Grock is a unique institution, like the moon or the Marble Arch. He is a bundle of contradictions: bland and sinister, as stupid as an owl and a Machiavelli of astuteness, flat-footed and feather-light, cacophonously riotous and "most musical, most melancholy." On his first entrance you are not quite sure whether he is human or simian, but he at once settles the question by startling you into laughter with a visual joke beyond the compass of any ape, however accomplished. A strange monster with a very high and very bald cranium, and in very baggy breeches, waddles in with an enormous portmanteau—which proves to contain a fiddle no larger than your hand. It seems a simple thing to laugh at, but your laughter may be explained by one of the many theories of the comic (not M. Bergson's), the theory of suddenly relaxed strain. Your psychic energies have been strained to cope with the idea of Grock's huge portmanteau, and are suddenly in excess and let loose by an inadequate sequel—the tiny fiddle.

Then the monster has a monstrous voice, which seems in the *fff* passages almost to lift the roof. It can be used for musical sounds—as when Grock counterfeits the deep notes of an imaginary double bass, which he balances himself on the back of a chair to play—and it can be used for reminiscences of the Zoo—as when he roars with contemptuous surprise at being asked if he can play the piano. Play the piano! (Here the violinist gives him a friendly hint that pianists usually appear in evening dress, whereon the accommodating monster waddles off to change, and returns looking like a grotesque beetle.) His chair being too far from the keyboard, he makes violent and repeated efforts to push the piano nearer. When it is whispered to him that it would be easier to move the chair he beams with naïve delight at the ingenuity of the suggestion, and expresses his appreciation in a peculiarly bland roar. Then he slides, in apparent absence of mind, all over the piano case, and, on finally deciding to play a tune, does it with his feet. Thereafter he thrusts his feet through the seat of the chair and proceeds to give a performance of extraordinary brilliance on the concertina.

HERE one must have recourse to another theory of the comic, the old theory of Aristotle that the comic is ugliness without pain. That will account for your laughter at Grock's grotesque appearance, his baggy breeches, his beetle-like dress clothes, his hideous mouth giving utterance to harmless ejaculations. Again, there is the pleasure arising from the discovery that an apparent idiot has wholly unexpected superiorities, acrobatic skill, and virtuosity in musical execution. And the final attraction of Grock is in your divination of a certain benignity of nature behind the mask of powder and paint. You feel that the monster is an amiable monster. You seem to discern in him a ripe wisdom and competence in the art of life, not without something of that philosophic indifference of the sage which the Greeks called "ataraxy."

Clowns always suggest contrasts. Against his buffoonery in public you see some tragic grief in private, say a faithless wife. But that is "Pagliacci." Or under the daubs of red and white you see the pale hue of disease and death. But that is Dickens. Poets, notably Théodore de Banville, have conceived the clown as himself a poet. For my part, I like to think of him, or at any rate of Grock, as a contemplative philosopher, who, while he slides over the piano case or plays on the keyboard with his feet, is conscious all the time of possessing the secret of the universe, hidden from all the rest of us who laugh at him. That, I imagine, is why he regards us so benignly.

Without Prejudice

by

ETHEL M. DELL

ILLUSTRATED BY
W R S. STOTT

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST INSTALMENT.

Dot Burton, living in the wilds of Australia with her brother Jack and his wife Adela, is anxious to earn her own living. Her brother, however, does not wish her to leave home except to marry, and strongly urges her to accept a great friend of his, Fletcher Hill, a magistrate who had attained his prominent position by sheer hard work in the police force.

But Dot's heart had been given five years previously to a man who saved her from death by snake-bite—an outlaw known as Buckskin Bill, who had managed to slip through Fletcher Hill's fingers, and who had promised Dot to come back when he had turned over a new leaf.

Fletcher's persistence, however, backed by her brother's advice, at last had its reward, and Dot has just given a reluctant consent to their engagement.

CHAPTER V.

THE LOST ROMANCE.

JACK looked in vain for any sign of elation on his friend's face when he entered. He read nothing but grim determination. Dot's demeanour also was scarcely reassuring. She seemed afraid to lift her eyes.

"Isn't it nearly bed-time?" she murmured to Adela as she passed.

Adela looked at her with frank curiosity. There were no fine shades of feeling about Adela. She always went straight to the point—unless restrained by Jack.

"Oh, it's quite early yet," she said, wholly missing the appeal in the girl's low-spoken words. "What have you two been doing? Moonshining?"

Fletcher looked as contemptuous as his immobile countenance would allow, and sat down by his untouched drink without a word.

But it took more than a look to repress Adela. She laughed aloud. "Does that mean I am to draw my own conclusions, Mr. Hill? Would you like me to tell you what they are?"

"Not for my amusement," said Hill, dryly. "Where did you get this whisky from, Jack? I hope it's a legal brand."

"I hope it is," agreed Jack. "I don't know its origin. I got it through Harley. You know him? The manager of the Fortescue Gold Mine."

"Yes, I know him," said Hill. "He is retiring, and another fellow is taking his place."

"Retiring, is he? I thought he was the only person who could manage that crowd." Jack spoke with surprise.

Hill took out his pipe and began to fill it. "He's got beyond it. Too much running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. They need a younger man with more decision and resource—someone who can handle them without being afraid."

"Have they got such a man?" questioned Jack.

"They believe they have." Hill spoke thoughtfully. "He's a man from the West, who has done some tough work in the desert, but brought back more in the way of experience than gold. He's been working in the Fortescue Mine now for six months, a foreman for the past three. Harley tells

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me the men will follow him like sheep. But for myself, I'm not so sure of him."

"Not sure of him? What are you afraid of? Whisky-running?" asked Jack, with a twinkle.

There was no answering gleam of humour on Hill's face. "I never trust any man until I know him," he said. "He may be sound, or he may be a scoundrel. He's got to prove himself."

"You take a fatherly interest in that mine," observed Jack.

"I have a reason," said Fletcher Hill, briefly.

"Ah! Ever met Fortescue himself?"

"Once or twice," said Hill.

"Pretty badly hated, isn't he?" said Jack.

"By the blackguards, yes." Hill spoke with characteristic grimness. "He's none the worse for that."

"All the better, I should say," remarked Adela. "But what is he like? Is he an old man?"

"About my age," said Hill.

"I wish you'd give us an introduction to him," she said, with animation. "I've always wanted to see that mine. You'd like to, too, wouldn't you, Dot?"

Dot started a little. She had been sitting quite silent in the background.

"I expect it would be quite interesting," she said, as Hill looked towards her. "But perhaps it wouldn't be very easy to manage it."

"I could arrange it if you cared to go," said Hill.

"Could you? How kind of you! But it would mean spending the night at Trelevan, wouldn't it? I—I think we are too busy for that." Dot glanced at her brother in some uncertainty.

"Oh, it could be managed," said Jack, kindly. "Why not? You don't get much fun in life. If you want to see the mine, and Hill can arrange it, it shall be done."

"Thank you," said Dot.

Adela turned towards her. "My dear, do work up a little enthusiasm! You've sat like a mute ever since you came in. What's the matter?"

Dot was on her feet in a moment. This sort of baiting, good-natured though it was, was more than she could bear. "I've one or two jobs left in the kitchen," she said. "I'll go and attend to them—if no one minds."

She was gone with the words, Adela's ringing laugh pursuing her as she closed the door. She barely paused in the kitchen, but fled to her own room. She could not—no, she could not—face the laughter and congratulations that night.

SHE flung herself down upon her bed and lay there trembling like a terrified creature caught in a trap. Her brain was a whirl of bewildering emotions. She knew not which way to turn to escape the turmoil, or even if she were glad or sorry for the step she had taken. She wondered if Hill would tell Jack and Adela the moment her back was turned, and dreaded to hear the sound of her sister-in-law's footsteps outside her door.

But no one came, and after a time she grew calmer. After all, though in the end she had made her decision somewhat suddenly, it had not been an unconsidered one. Though she could not pretend to love Fletcher Hill, she had a sincere respect for him. He was solid, and she knew that her future would be safe in his hands. The past was past, and every day took her farther from it. Yet very deep down in her soul there still lurked the memory of that past. In the daytime she could put it from her, stifle it, crowd it out with a multitude of tasks; but at night in her dreams that memory would not always be denied. In her dreams the old vision returned—tender, mocking, elusive—a sunburnt face with eyes of vivid blue that looked into hers, smiling and confident with that confidence that is only possible between spirits that are akin. She would feel again the pressure of a man's lips on the hollow of her arm—that spot which still bore the tiny mark which once had been a snake-bite. He had come to her in her hour of need, and though he was a fugitive from justice, she would never forget his goodness, his readiness to serve her, his chivalry. And while in her waking hours she chid herself for her sentimentality, yet even so, she had not been able to force herself to cast her brief romance away.

Ah, well, she had done it now. The way was closed behind her. There could be no return. It was all so long ago. She had been little more than a child then, and now she was growing old. The time had come to face the realities of life, to put away the dreams. She believed that Fletcher Hill was a good man, and he had been very patient. She quivered a little at the thought of that patience of his. There was a cast-iron quality about it, a forcefulness, that made her wonder. Had she ever really met the man who dwelt within that coat of mail? Could there be some terrible revelation in store for her? Would she some day find that she had given herself to a being utterly alien to her in thought and impulse? He had shown her so little—so very little—of his soul.

Did he really love her, she wondered? Or had he merely determined to win her because it had been so hard a task? He was

a man who revelled in overcoming difficulties, in asserting his grim mastery in the face of heavy odds. He was never deterred by circumstances, never turned back from any purpose upon the accomplishment of which he had set his mind. His subordinates were afraid to tell him of failure. She had heard it said that Bloodhound Hill could be a savage animal when roused.

THERE came a low sound at her door, the soft turning of the handle, Jack's voice whispering through the gloom.

"Are you asleep, little 'un?"

She started up on the bed. "Oh, Jack, come in, dear! Come in!"

He came to her, put his arms about her, and held her close. "Fletcher's been telling me," he whispered into her ear. "Adela's gone to bed. It's quite all right, little 'un, is it? You're not—sorry?"

She caught the anxiety in the words as she clung to him. "I—don't think so," she whispered back. "Only I—I'm rather frightened, Jack."

"There's no need, darling," said Jack, and kissed her very tenderly. "He's a good fellow—the best of fellows. He's sworn to me to make you happy."

She was trembling a little in his hold. "He—doesn't want to marry me yet, does he?" she asked, nervously.

He put a very gentle hand upon her head. "Don't funk the last fence, old girl!" he said, softly. "You'll like being married."

"Ah!" She was breathing quickly. "I am not so sure. And there's no getting back, is there, Jack? Oh, please, do ask him to wait a little while! I'm sure he will. He is very kind."

"He has waited five years already," Jack pointed out. "Don't you think that's almost long enough, dear?"

"He came to her, put his arms about her, and held her close."

She put a hand to her throat, feeling as if there were some constriction there. "He has been speaking to you about it! He wants you to—to persuade me—to—to make me——"

"No, dear, no!" Jack spoke very gravely. "He wants you to please yourself. It is I who think that a long delay would be a mistake. Can't you be brave, Dot? Take what the gods send—and be thankful?"

She tried to laugh. "I'm an awful idiot, Jack. Yes, I will—I will be brave. After all, it isn't as if—as if I were really sacrificing anything, is it? And you're sure he's a good man, aren't you? You are sure he will never let me down?"

"I am quite sure," Jack said, firmly. "He is a fine man, Dot, and he will always set your happiness before his own."

She breathed a short sigh. "Thank you, Jack. I feel better. You're wonderfully good to me, dear old boy. Tell him—tell him I'll marry him as soon as ever I can get ready! I must get a few things together first, mustn't I?"

Jack laughed a little. "You look very nice in what you've got."

"Oh, don't be silly!" she said. "If I'm

going to live at Wallacetown—Wallacetown, mind you, the smartest place this side of Sydney—I must be respectably clothed. I shall have to go to Trelevan, and see what I can find."

"You and Adela had better have a week off," said Jack, "and go while Fletcher is busy there. You'll see something of him in the evenings then."

"What about you?" she said, squeezing his arm.

"Oh, I shall be all right. I'm expecting Lawley in from the ranges. He'll help me. I've got to learn to do without you, eh, little 'un?" He held her to him again.

She clasped his neck. "It's your own doing, Jack; but I know it's for my good. You must let me come and help you sometimes—just for a holiday." Her voice trembled.

He kissed her again with great tenderness. "You'll come just whenever you feel like it, my dear," he said. "And God bless you!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE WAY TO HAPPINESS.

ON account of its comparative proximity to the gold mine, Trelevan, though of no great size, was a busy place. Dot had stayed at the hotel there with her brother on one or two occasions, but it was usually noisy and crowded, and, unlike Adela, she found little to amuse her in the type of men who thronged it. Fletcher Hill always stayed there when he came to Trelevan. The police-court was close by, and it suited his purpose; but he mixed very little with his fellow-guests and was generally regarded as unapproachable—a mere judicial machine with whom very few troubled to make acquaintance.

Fletcher Hill in the *rôle* of a squire of dames was a situation that vastly tickled Adela's sense of humour. As she told Jack, it was going to be the funniest joke of her life.

Neither Hill nor his grave young *fiancée* seemed aware of any cause for mirth, but with Adela that was neither here nor there. She and Dot never had had anything in common, and as for Fletcher Hill, he was the driest stick of a man she had ever met. But she was not going to be bored on that account. To give Adela her due, boredom was a malady from which she very rarely suffered.

She was in the best of spirits on the evening of their arrival at Trelevan. The rooms that Fletcher Hill had managed to secure for them led out of each other, and the smaller of them, Dot's, looked out over the busiest part of the town. As Adela pointed out, this was an advantage of little value at night, and it could be shared in the daytime.

Dot said nothing. She was used to her sister-in-law's cheerful egotism, and Adela had never hesitated to invade her privacy if she felt so inclined. Her chief consolation was that Adela was a very sound sleeper, so that there was small chance of having her solitude disturbed at night.

She herself was not sleeping so well as usual just then. A great restlessness was upon her, and often she would pace to and fro like a caged thing for half the night. She was not actively unhappy, but a great weight seemed to oppress her—a sense of foreboding that was sometimes more than she could bear.

Fletcher Hill's calm countenance as he welcomed them upon their arrival reassured her somewhat. He was so perfectly self-controlled and steady in his demeanour. The very grasp of his hand conveyed confidence. She felt as if he did her good.

They dined together in the common dining-room, but at a separate table in a corner. There were many coming and going, and Adela was frankly interested in them all. As she said, it was so seldom that she had the chance of studying the human species in such variety. When the meal was over she good-naturedly settled herself in a secluded corner and commanded them to leave her.

"There's something in the shape of a glass-house at the back," she said. "I don't know if it can be called a conservatory. But anyhow I should think you might find a seat and solitude there, and that, I conclude, is what you most want. Anyhow, don't bother about me! I can amuse myself here for any length of time."

They took her at her word, though neither of them seemed in any hurry to depart. Dot lingered because the prospect of a *tête-à-tête* in a strange place where she could not easily make her escape if she desired to do so embarrassed her. And Hill waited, as his custom was, with a grim patience that somehow only served to increase her reluctance to be alone with him.

"Run along! It's getting late," Adela said at last. "Carry her off, Mr. Hill! You'll never get her to make the first move."

There was some significance in words and smile. Dot stiffened and turned sharply away.

Hill followed her, and outside the room she waited for him.

"Do you know the way?" she asked, without looking at him.

He took her by the arm, and again she had a wayward thought of the hand of the law. She knew now what it felt like to be marshalled by a policeman. She almost uttered a remark to that effect, but, glancing up at

him, decided that it would be out of place. For the man's harsh features were so sternly set that she wondered if Adela's careless talk had aroused his anger.

She said nothing, therefore, and he led her to the retreat her sister-in-law had mentioned in unbroken silence. It was certainly not a very artistic corner. A few straggling plants in pots decorated it, but they looked neglected and shabby. Yet the thought went through her, it might have been a bower of delight had they been in the close accord of lovers who desire naught but each other.

THE place was deserted, lighted only by a high window that looked into a billiard-room. The window was closed, but the rattle of the balls and careless voices of the players came through the silence. A dusty bench was let into the wall below it.

"Do you like this place?" asked Fletcher Hill.

She glanced around her with a little nervous laugh. "It's as good as any other, isn't it?"

His hand still held her arm. He bent slightly, looking into her face. "I've been wanting to talk to you," he said.

"Have you?" She tried to meet his look, but failed. "What about?" she said, almost in a whisper.

He bent lower. "Dot, are you afraid of me?" he said.

That brought her eyes to his face with a jerk. "I—I—no—of course not!" she stammered, in confusion.

"Quite sure?" he said.

She collected herself with an effort. "Quite," she told him with decision, and met his gaze with something of a challenge in her own.

But he disconcerted her the next moment. She felt again the man's grim mastery behind the iron of his patience. "I want to talk to you," he said, "about our marriage."

"Ah!" It was scarcely more than a sharp intake of the breath, and as it escaped again Dot turned white to the lips. His close scrutiny became suddenly more than she could bear, and she turned sharply from him.

He kept his hand upon her arm, but he made no further effort to restrain her, merely waiting mutely for her to speak.

In the room behind them there came the smart knocking of the balls, and a voice cried, "By Jove, he's fluked again! It's the devil's own luck!"

Dot flinched a little. The careless voice jarred upon her. Her nerves were all on edge. Fletcher Hill's hand was like a steel trap, cold and firm and merciless. She longed to wrench herself free from it, yet felt too paralysed to move.

And still he waited, not urging her, yet by his very silence making her aware of a compulsion she could not hope to resist for long.

She turned to him at last in desperation. "What—have you to suggest?" she asked.

"I?" he said. "I shall be ready at the end of the week—if that will suit you."

She gazed at him blankly. "The end of the week! But of course not—of course not! You are joking!"

"No. I am serious," Fletcher said. "Sit down a minute and let me explain!"

Then, as she hesitated, he very gently put her down upon the seat under the closed window, and stood before her, blocking her in.

"I have been wanting this opportunity of talking to you," he said, "without Jack chipping in. He's a good fellow, and I know he is on my side. But I have a fancy for scoring off my own bat. Listen, Dot! I am not suggesting anything very preposterous. You have promised to marry me. Haven't you?"

"Yes," she whispered, breathlessly. "Yes."

"Yes," he repeated. "And the longer you have to think about it, the more scared you will get. My dear child, what is the point of spinning it out in this fashion? You are going through agonies of mind—for nothing. If I gave you back your freedom, you wouldn't be any happier, would you?"

She was silent.

"Would you?" he said again, and laid his hand upon her shoulder.

"I—don't think so," she said, faintly.

He took up her words again with magisterial emphasis. "You don't think so. Well, there is every reason to suppose you wouldn't. You weren't happy before, were you?"

She gripped her courage with immense effort. "I haven't been happy—since," she said.

He accepted the statement without an instant's discomfiture. "I know you haven't. I realized that the moment I saw you. You have been suffering the tortures of the damned because you're in a positive hell of indecision. Oh, I know all about it." His hand moved a little upon her shoulder; it almost seemed to caress her. "I haven't studied human nature all these years for nothing. I know you're in a perfect fever of doubt, and it'll go on till you're married. What's the good of it? Why torture yourself like this when the way to happiness lies straight before you? Are you hoping against hope that something may yet turn up to prevent our marriage? Would you be happy if it did? Answer me!"

But she shrank from answering, sitting with her hands clasped tightly before her and her eyes downcast like a prisoner awaiting sentence. "I don't know—what I want," she told him, miserably. "I feel—as if—whatever I do - will be wrong."

"That's just it," said Fletcher Hill, as if that were the very admission he had been waiting for. And then he did what for him was a very curious thing. He went down upon one knee on the dusty floor, bringing his face on a level with hers, clasping her tense hands between his own. "You don't trust yourself, and you won't trust me," he said. "Isn't that it? Or something like it?"

The official air had dropped from him like a garment. She looked at him doubtfully, almost as if she suspected him of trying to trick her. Then, reassured by something in the harsh countenance which his voice and words utterly failed to express, she leaned impulsively forward with a swift movement of surrender and laid her head against his shoulder.

"I'll do—whatever you wish," she said, in muffled tones. "I will trust you! I do trust you!"

He put his arm around her, for she was trembling, and held her so for a space in silence.

THE voice in the billiard-room took up the tale. "That fellow's luck is positively prodigious. He can't help scoring—whatever he does. He'd dig gold out of an ash-heap."

Someone laughed, and there came again the clash of the billiard-balls, followed in a second by a shout of applause.

The noise subsided, and Fletcher spoke. "My job here will be over in a week. Jack can manage to join us at the end of it. Your sister-in-law is already here. Why not finish up by getting married and returning to Wallacetown with me?"

"I should have to go back to the farm and get the rest of my things," said Dot.

"You could do that afterwards," he said, "when I am away on business. I sha'n't be able to take you with me everywhere. Some of the places I have to go to would be too rough for you. But I shall be at Wallacetown for some weeks after this job. You have never seen my house there. I took it over from the last Superintendent. I think you'll like it. I got it for that reason."

She started a little. "But you didn't know then—— How long ago was it?"

"Three years," said Fletcher Hill. "I've been getting it ready for you ever since."

She looked up at him. "You—took a good deal for granted, didn't you?" she said.

Fletcher was smiling, dryly humorous. "I knew my own mind, anyway," he said.

"And you've never had—any doubts?" questioned Dot.

"Not one," said Fletcher Hill.

She laid her hand on his arm with a shy gesture. "I hope you won't be dreadfully disappointed in me," she said.

He bent towards her, and for a moment she felt as if his keen eyes pierced her. "I don't think that is very likely," he said, and kissed her with the words.

She did not shrink from his kiss, but she did not return it; nor did he linger as if expecting any return.

He was on his feet the next moment, and she wondered with a little sense of chill if he were really satisfied.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONQUEROR.

THEY found Adela awaiting them in her corner, but chafing for a change.

"I want you to take us to the billiard-room," she said to Fletcher. "There's a great match on. I've heard a lot of men talking about it. And I adore watching billiards. I'm sure we sha'n't be in the way. I'll promise not to talk, and Dot is as quiet as a mouse."

Fletcher considered the point. "I believe it's a fairly respectable crowd," he said, looking at Dot. "But you're tired."

"Oh, no," she said at once. "I don't feel a bit sleepy. Let us go in by all means if you think no one will mind! I like watching billiards, too."

"It's a man called Warden," said Adela. "That's the new manager of the Fortescue Gold Mine, isn't it? They say he has the most marvellous luck. He is playing the old manager—Harley, and giving him fifty points. There's some pretty warm betting going on, I can tell you. Do let us go and have a look at them! They've got the girl from the bar to mark for them, so we sha'n't be the only women there."

She was evidently on fire for this new excitement, and Fletcher Hill, seeing that Dot meant what she said, led the way without further discussion. He paused outside the billiard-room door, which stood ajar; for a tense silence reigned. But it was broken in a moment by the sharp clash of the balls and a perfect howl of enthusiasm from the spectators.

"Oh, it's over!" exclaimed Adela. "What a pity! Never mind! Let's go in! Perhaps they'll play again."

The barmaid came flying out to fetch drinks as they entered. The atmosphere of the room was thick with smoke. A babel of voices filled it. Men who had been sitting

"And then he did what for him was a very curious thing. He went down upon one knee on the dusty floor, clasping her tense hands between his own."

"She saw him approach Warden and tap him on the shoulder. Warden wheeled sharply, so sharply that the drink he held splashed over the edge of the glass. She watched the two men with an odd breathlessness."

round the walls were grouped about the table. In the midst of them stood the victor in his shirt-sleeves, conspicuous in the crowd by reason of his great height—a splendid figure of manhood with a careless freedom of bearing that was in its way superb.

He was turned away from the door at their entrance, and Dot saw only a massive head of straw-coloured hair above a neck that was burnt brick-red. Then, laughing at some joke, he wheeled round again to the table; and she saw his face. . . .

It was the face of a Viking, deeply sunburnt, vividly alive. A fair moustache covered his upper lip, and below it the teeth gleamed, white and regular like the teeth of an animal in the wilderness. He had that indescribable look of morning-time, of youth at its best, which only springs in the wild. His eyes were intensely blue. They gazed straight across at her with startling directness.

And suddenly Dot's heart gave a great jerk, and stood still. It was not the first time that those eyes had looked into hers.

The moment passed. He bent himself over the table, poised for a stroke, which she saw him execute a second later with a delicacy that thrilled her strangely. Full well did she remember the deftness and the steadiness of those brown hands. Had they not held her up, sustained her, in the greatest crisis of her life?

Her heart throbbed on again with hard, uneven strokes. She was straining her ears for the sound of his voice—that voice that had once spoken to her quivering soul, pleading with her that she would at their next meeting treat him—without prejudice. The memory thrilled through her. This was the man for whose coming she had waited so long!

He had straightened himself again, and was coming round the table to follow up his stroke. Fletcher Hill spoke at her shoulder.

"Sit down!" he said. "There is room here."

There was a small space on the corner of the raised settee that ran along the side of the room. Dot and Adela sat down together. Hill stood beside them, looking over the faces of the men present with keen eyes that missed nothing.

Dot sat palpitating, her hands clasped before her, seeing only the great figure that leaned over the table for another stroke.

Would he look at her again? Would he remember her? Would he speak?

Fascinated, she watched him. He executed his stroke, again with that steady confidence, that self-detachment, that seemed to set him apart from all other men. He was standing close to her now, and the nearness of his presence thrilled her. She tingled from head to foot, as if under the power of an electric battery.

His late opponent stood facing her on the other side of the table, a grey-haired man with crafty eyes that seemed to look in all directions at the same time. She took an instinctive dislike to him. He wore a furtive air.

Warden stood up again, moving with that free swing of his as of one born to conquer. He turned deliberately and faced them.

"Good evening, Mr. Hill!" he said. "I'm standing drinks all round. I hope you will join us."

It was frankly spoken, and Hill's instant refusal sounded unnecessarily curt in Dot's ears.

"No, thanks. I am with ladies," he said. "I suppose the play is over?"

Warden glanced across the table. "Unless Harley wants his revenge," he said.

The grey-haired man uttered a laugh that was like the bark of a vicious dog. "I'll have that another day," he said. "It won't spoil by keeping. You are a player yourself, Mr. Hill. Why don't you take him on?"

"Oh, do!" burst forth Adela. "I should love to see a good game. You ask him to, Dot! He'll do it for you."

But Dot sat silent, her fingers straining against each other, her eyes fixed straight before her, seeing yet unseeing, as one beneath a spell.

THERE was a momentary pause. The room was full of the harsh babel of men's voices. The drinks were being distributed.

Suddenly a voice spoke out above the rest. "Here's to the new manager! Good luck to him! Bill Warden, here's to you! Success and plenty of it!"

Instantly the hubbub increased a hundredfold. Bill Warden swung round laughing to face the clamour, and the tension went out of Dot. She drooped forward with a weary

gesture. As in a dream she heard the laughter and the shouting. It seemed to sweep around her in great billows of sound. But she was too tired to notice, too tired to care. He did not know her. She was sure of that now. He had forgotten. The memory that had affected her so poignantly had slipped like a dim cloud below his horizon. The glory had departed, and life was grey and cold.

"You are tired," said Fletcher's voice beside her. "Would you like to go?"

She looked up at him. His eyes were searching hers, and swiftly she realized that this discovery that she had made must be kept a secret. If Hill began to suspect, he would very quickly ferret out the truth, and the man would be ruined. She knew Hill's stern justice. He would act instantly and without mercy if he knew the truth.

She braced herself with a great effort to baffle him. "No, oh, no!" she said. "I am really not tired. Do play! I should love to see you play."

He looked sardonic. "Love to see me beaten!" he said.

She put out a quick hand. "Of course not! You will beat him easily. You are always on the top. Do try!"

He smiled a little, and turned from her. She saw him approach Warden and tap him on the shoulder.

Warden wheeled sharply, so sharply that the drink he held splashed over the edge of the glass. The excitement in the room was dying down. She watched the two men with an odd breathlessness, and in a moment she realized that everyone else present was watching them also.

Then they both turned towards her, and through a great singing that suddenly arose in her ears she heard Adela whisper excitedly, "My dear, he is actually going to introduce that amazing person to us!"

She sat up with a stiff movement, feeling cold, inanimate, strangely impotent, and in a moment he was standing before her with Fletcher, and she heard the latter introduce her as his "affianced wife."

Mutely she gave him her hand. It was Adela who filled in the gap, eager for entertainment, and the next moment Warden had turned to her, and was talking in his careless, leisurely fashion. The ordeal was past, her pulses quieted down again. Yet she realized that he had not addressed a single word to her, and the conviction came upon her that not thus would he have treated one who was a total stranger to him.

Because of Fletcher, who remained beside her, she forced herself to join in the conversation, seconding Adela's urgent request that the two men would play.

Warden laughed and looked at Fletcher. "Do you care to take me on, sir?" he said.

From the other side of the table, Harley uttered his barking laugh. "Now is your chance, Mr. Hill! Down him once and for all, and give us the pleasure of seeing how it's done!"

There was venom in the words. They were a revelation to Dot, the almost silent looker-on. It was as if a flashlight had given her a sudden glimpse of this man's soul, showing her bitter enmity—a black and cruel hatred—an implacable yearning for revenge. She felt as if she had looked down into the seething heart of a volcano.

Then she heard Hill's voice. "I am quite willing to play," he said.

A buzz of interest went through the room. The prospective match plainly excited Warden's many admirers. They drew together, and she heard some low-voiced betting begin.

But this was instantly checked by Fletcher. "I'm not doing it for a gamble," he said, curtly. "Please keep your money in your pockets, or the match is off!"

They looked at him with lowering glances, but they submitted. It was evident to Dot that they all stood in considerable awe of him all save Warden, who chalked Hill's cue with supreme self-assurance, and then lighted a cigarette without the smallest hint of embarrassment.

THE match began, and though the gambling had been checked a breathless interest prevailed. Fletcher Hill's play was not well known at Trelevan, but at the very outset it was evident to the most casual observer that he was a skilled player. He spoke scarcely at all, and his face was mask-like in its composure, but Dot, watching, knew with that intuition which of late had begun to grow upon her that he was grimly set upon obtaining the victory. The knowledge thrilled her with a strange excitement. She knew that he was in a fashion desirous of proving himself in her eyes, that he had entered into the contest solely for her.

As for Warden, she believed he was playing entirely to please himself. He took an artistic interest in every stroke, but the ultimate issue of the game did not seem to enter into his calculation. He played like a sportsman, sometimes rashly, often brilliantly, but never selfishly. It was impossible to watch him with indifference. Even his failures were sensational. As Adela had said of him, he was amazing.

Hill's play was absolutely steady. It lacked the vitality of the younger man's, but it had about it a clockwork species of regularity that Dot found curiously pleasing to watch. She had not thought that her interest could be so deeply aroused; before

the game was half through she was as deeply absorbed as anyone present.

It did not take her long to realize that public sympathy was entirely on Warden's side, and it was that fact more than any other that disposed her in Fletcher's favour. She saw that he had a hard fight before him, for Warden led almost from the beginning, though with all his brilliancy he never drew very far ahead. Fletcher kept a steady pace behind him, and she knew he would not be easily beaten.

Once he came and stood beside her after a very creditable break, and she slipped a shy hand into his for a few seconds. His fingers closed upon it in that slow, inevitable way of his, but he neither spoke nor looked at her, and she had a feeling that his attention never for an instant wandered from the job in hand. She admired him for his concentration, yet would she have been less than woman had she not felt slighted by it. He might have given her one look!

Adela was full of enthusiasm for his opponent, and that also caused her a vague sense of irritation. She was beginning to feel as if the evening would never come to an end.

The scoring was by no means slow, however, and the general interest increased almost to fever pitch as the finish came in sight. Hill's steady progress in the wake of his opponent seemed at length to disconcert the latter. He began to play wildly, to attempt impossible things. His supporters remonstrated without result. He seemed to have flung away his judgment.

Hill's score mounted till it reached and passed his. They were within twenty points of the end when Warden suddenly missed an easy stroke. A noisy groan broke from the onlookers, at which he shrugged his shoulders and laughed. But Hill turned upon him with a stern reproof.

"You're playing the fool, Warden," he said. "Pull up!"

He spoke with curt command, and the man he addressed looked at him for a second with raised brows, as if he would take offence. But in a moment he laughed again.

"You haven't beaten me yet, sir," he said.

"No," said Hill. "And I don't value—an easy victory."

There followed a tense silence while he resumed his play. Steadily his score mounted, and it seemed to Dot that there was hostility in the very atmosphere. She wondered what would happen if he scored the hundred before his opponent had another chance. She hoped he would not do so, and yet she did not want to see him beaten.

He did not, but he left off with only three points to make. Then Warden began to score. Stroke after stroke he executed with flawless accuracy and with scarcely a pause, moving to and fro about the table without lifting his eyes from the balls. His play was swift and unswerving, his score mounted rapidly.

Dot watched him spellbound, not breathing. Hill stood near her, also closely watching, with brows slightly drawn. Suddenly something impelled her to look beyond the man at the table, and in the shadow on the farther side of the room she saw again Harley's face, grey, withered-looking, with sunken eyes that glared forth wolfishly. He was glancing ceaselessly from Hill to Warden and from Warden to Hill, and the malice of his glance shocked her inexpressibly. She had never before seen murderous hate so stamped upon any countenance.

INSTINCTIVELY she shrank from the sight, and in that moment Warden's eyes were lifted for a second from the table. Magnetically hers flashed to meet them. It was instantaneous, inevitable as the sudden flare of lightning across a dark sky.

He stooped again to play, but in that moment something had gone out of him. The stroke he attempted was an easy one; but he missed it hopelessly.

He straightened himself up with a sharp gesture and looked at Hill. "I am sorry," he said.

Hill said nothing whatever. Their scores were exactly even. With machine-like precision he took his turn, utterly ignoring the grumbling criticisms of his adversary's play that were being freely expressed around the room. With the utmost steadiness he made his stroke, scoring two points. Then there fell a tremendous silence. The choice of two strokes now lay before him. One was to pocket his adversary's ball; the other a long shot which required considerable skill. He chose the second without hesitation, hung a moment or two, made his stroke—and failed.

A howl of delight went up from the watchers, their hot partisanship of Warden amounting almost to open animosity against his opponent. In the midst of the noise Hill, perfectly calm, contemptuously indifferent, touched Warden again upon the shoulder, and spoke to him.

Warden said nothing in reply, but he went to his ball with a hint of savagery, bent, and almost without aiming sent it at terrific speed up the table. It struck first the red, then the white, pocketed the former, and whizzed therefrom into the opposite pocket.

A yell of delight went up. It was a brilliant stroke of which any player might have been proud. But Bill Warden flung down his cue with a gesture of disgust.

"Damnation!" he said, and turned to put on his coat.

(To be continued.)

Tracking Criminals

The DETECTIVE METHODS OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES COMPARED

by

JOSEPH GOLLOMB

Illustrated by E. Verpilleux.

SOME day a cold-blooded Izaak Walton will write a treatise on the complete art of man-hunting. The tracking by society of the men who prey on Man is already something of a sport and sometimes an art—in fiction. In real life it is a crusade, a science, a profession; there is no sporting ethics in it as yet, and police prefer the shortest way to the kill, whether it is good sport, art, or neither. But the quarry has grown clever with science and technique. And the hunter has had to keep up with him. The result is that so infinitely complex, delicate, and manifold have become the means and weapons of crime and of man-hunting with X-ray, dictaphone, micro-photography, chemical reagents, psycho-analysis, organization technique, card cataloguing, and ten thousand other devices, that the modern detective has come to exercise something of the care of the artist in choosing weapon and trail in his hunt. It is interesting to observe, therefore, the differences in the manner of man-hunting shown by the detective systems of London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna; and how in their hunting they reveal their racial traits.

Let us consider four actual cases.

A LONDON MURDER MYSTERY.

In a half-asleep residential section of East London there is a neglected three-storey private dwelling with heavy shutters and doors, inconspicuous and unattractive. It was just the kind of house for which an old man, who called himself Smithers, had been looking. For twenty years he had been accumulating money by buying all kinds of objects and no questions asked. He could drive a shrewd bargain, and his

business associates usually acceded to his terms, though not without many a curse and often more or less impressive threats. Smithers did not mind the former; but as he grew more and more rich, he worried about the threats. He knew his customers. So he tried to hide his riches, lived penuriously, whined about every penny, and, from assuming the miser, he with the years became one. Fear of being murdered and robbed drove him from his business to a retreat. The house, by reason of its inconspicuousness and strong doors and windows, attracted him and he bought it.

He secured every possible entrance into the house with bars and double locks and, with an expensive knowledge of burglar alarms, he had his home wired so that nobody could touch a door-knob, window-sash, or grating without setting an electric bell ringing. In addition, he arranged it so that if anyone detected the wiring and cut it, the loosened wire, dragged down by a leaden weight, would fall on a cartridge, and, exploding it, would give as effective notice of danger as the electric bell. He lived by himself, received no one, and attracted as little attention as he could.

Nevertheless, one day tradesmen began to wonder why he did not take in off the front steps the articles he had ordered to be delivered. The police were notified, an entrance was forced. Smithers was found murdered. The burglar alarm had been cut, and under the fallen leaden weight was found a pad of cloth and the cartridge unexploded. A strong box had been rifled. Whoever had done the business was no novice. There was not a finger-print to be found, the work having obviously been done in gloves. The only clue left for the police to work on was a small dark lantern, a child's toy without a doubt, which had been left contemptuously behind by the burglars.

SCOTLAND YARD went to work on the case. With only the child's lantern to work on as a clue to the murder mystery the problem became at first mere drudgery. A tedious round of manufacturers and toy-shops followed, to determine, if possible, where that lantern was bought. In this search team-work was everything, individual cleverness availed nothing. Finally it seemed probable that the lantern was such as a mother in one of many tenement districts in London would buy for a seven-year-old child to play with.

Another council was held and a simple plan devised as the next phase of the hunt. A detective who had a seven-year-old son was assigned to an exceedingly easy task. He was told to allow his boy to play with the lantern in the streets of the quarter from which it may have come and to see what happened. For a week nothing at all happened, and father and son were asked to do the same in the adjoining district. Here the simple device brought no better results, and again they were assigned new territory. This happened several times, until it began to look as though nothing at all would come of it.

But with the doggedness of the race, Scotland Yard hung on to the trail, if trail it was. Then one day a little boy of the quarter edged up to the policeman's son, looked sharply at the lantern with which the youngster was languidly playing, and set up a wail:—

"I want my lantern!"

"'Tain't your lantern!" the detective's son retorted, indignantly.

"Yes, it is. I know it is!"

The detective came forward.

"Are you sure?" he asked, gently. "Because my son has had it for many weeks, you know."

"'Ere, I'll prove it's mine," the strange boy said. "When my wick burned out I cut off a little piece of my sister's flannel petticoat for a new wick."

The detective opened the lantern and, examining the wick, found it to be of flannel, as the boy had said.

"We'll have to ask your mother about this," the detective said. "If you're telling the truth you shall have your lantern back."

The three went to the boy's mother, a widow, who kept lodgers. The woman, honest and hard-working, confirmed her son's claim. The detective kept his word, returned the lantern, but questioning the widow further, found out that the boy missed the lantern at about the same time that two of her lodgers had left without paying their bills. One had told her that he was an electrician, the other a plumber's apprentice, and she remembered seeing tools of their trade, or what she thought were such, in their room.

Then followed another series of weary searches by the men of Scotland Yard: searches among young plumbers and among electricians; in the underworld for two young fellows answering to the descriptions the widow gave; in the files of criminal records in Scotland Yard; in more expensive lodging-houses, and in dance-resorts. Nothing short of a big organization imbued with team-work and bulldog perseverance could have accomplished that search. But at last two young men were found whom the widow, unknown to them, identified as her former lodgers.

The police had as yet nothing more serious

against them than unpaid bills. So they secretly kept them under observation. It was thus they learned that the young men were fond of target-shooting with a revolver at trees in the country. The bullets extracted from the trees proved to be of the same exceptionally large size as that found in the murdered miser's brain.

Tactfully, patiently, a corps of detectives searched into the past of the two men, each finding out some seemingly unimportant item. But the whole was becoming a net in which one day the two men found themselves inextricably fast on the charge of the murder and robbery of Smithers.

How fast they were caught they did not know until the trial. Then the smaller of the two defendants, suddenly losing courage, cried out that he would turn King's evidence against his accomplice. Before he could blurt out another word the other leaped at his throat and almost succeeded in killing him before they could be separated.

"I'll stand a free man and watch you hang, you——!" the little man sobbed. "Listen to me, my Lord! If you promise to let me go free——"

But he was gently informed that the case for the Crown needed no help from him—as it proved.

HOW THE FRENCH POLICE WORK.

Now let us contrast with this man-hunt another under similar circumstances in Paris. There had been a remarkable series of burglaries in the aristocratic Etoile section. In each case the burglar—for there was every sign that one man was committing them—took art objects of considerable value but never of such marked uniqueness that they could not be disposed of without difficulty or danger. Indeed, the man's skill in entering well-guarded homes, in gathering his loot, and in disposing of it was such that the Paris police had not a trace to work on. It goes without saying that this man, too, worked with gloves, so that there was never a finger-print left as a clue.

The Paris police, so to speak, ran round in circles trying to find his trail. One theory was as little fruitful as another, and each man on the hunt followed his own. One detective-inspector (let us call him Dornay) struck out on a lone hunt. Posing as a *nouveau riche* art-collector and *bon vivant*, he made scores of acquaintances in the fast set where his quarry might conceivably be found. In this way he became interested in a rather quiet, alert man who knew where good values in art objects could be had. Dornay showed more friendliness than the other accepted and, apparently hurt, the detective thereafter avoided the unsociable man, whom he knew by the name of Laroche.

Thus far Dornay had only a more or less nebulous theory about Laroche's connection with the elusive burglar he was hunting. It was so nebulous that the detective could not convince his colleagues sufficiently to secure the number of men needed to keep track of all Laroche's movements. For the latter had an uncanny way of eluding Dornay's vigilance, in spite of all that Dornay could do by himself to keep Laroche in sight.

Thereupon Dornay determined to get Laroche unconsciously either to clear or to implicate himself. Watching one night outside Laroche's hotel, he saw the latter leave in evening dress. Dornay stole up to the man's room, let himself in with a skeleton key, and thoroughly searched. The only discoveries that interested him were a much-used pair of gloves, and the water carafe and drinking-glass Laroche kept on a little stand to the left of his bed.

With a file, Dornay rubbed gently at a spot in the thumb of the left-hand glove until little more than a thin filament of chamois remained, which, however, would not be noticeable at a careless glance. Then the detective carefully polished clean the outsides of the carafe and the drinking-

"'I want my lantern!' 'Tain't your lantern! the know it is!' Then the

glass. He took nothing with him when he left.

But next morning when Laroche again left the hotel, Dornay stole back into the room and eagerly examined the carafe and the drinking-glass. With a camel's-hair brush he dusted some graphite powder on it until Laroche's finger-prints showed clearly. Substituting other glassware, Dornay carefully brought Laroche's to police headquarters.

Three weeks later still another burglary was reported, bearing all the marks of the elusive burglar. But this time the police found faint impressions of a left thumb—and only that. However, it was sufficient. Dornay's instinct and little plot had won. As he knew, the moisture of the human finger is sufficient to leave a print even through gloves if the intervening texture is thin. And the finger-prints on the scene of the latest burglary were identical with those on Laroche's carafe and drinking-glass.

Call it Anglo-Saxon love of team-play, or a racial disinclination of the individual to shove himself forward at the expense of the group interest, or whatever other trait it illustrates, the Scotland Yard treatment of the Smithers murder mystery was characteristic. Certainly the instinct for organization and organized effort, which has made Scotland Yard the foremost man-hunting medium in the world, is the inspiration not of individuals but of the race. In contrast in method was the Paris police treatment of the Laroche burglaries. The Frenchman is keenly individual in his work. It makes him less patient, therefore less efficient in organization, and, consequently, throws him back again on individual effort. He is much more prone, as a detective, to hunt by himself than with his colleagues.

detective's son retorted, indignantly. 'Yes, it is. I detective came forward."

GERMAN METHODS.

Like the Anglo-Saxon gift for organization is the German passion for it. But there is a vital difference between the two in the outcome of the organization, a difference which is illustrated in the treatment by the Berlin detective force of a murder-mystery that occurred in that city several years ago. The under-secretary for one of the important governmental departments was found dead in an alley near his home in a Berlin suburb. He had evidently been seized from behind, garrotted until dead, dragged into the alley, and robbed. It was not till late the next day that his body was found; no one had been seen lurking about the scene of the crime; so that the police had practically nothing to work on, other than the manner of the crime.

But they have a machine in the Berlin police department that works almost automatically in the solution of such mysteries. It is typically a German product in the thoroughness of its organization, in the ruthlessness of its operation, in the vastness and, at the same time, in the minuteness of its product. Its principal part is the *Meldwesen*. Every citizen and visitor in Germany, the former from the day of his or her birth, the latter from the day of arrival, is recorded at

police headquarters, a card for each individual —and every card is kept up to date. If, for instance, the police want to know something about Carl Schmidt, respectable citizen, in three minutes after his name reaches police headquarters they know the date, place, and circumstances of his birth, a brief history of each of his parents—if German, a cross-reference to their individual cards will give a complete history; his education, religion, successive residences, dates of removals, names of business and other associates—again cross-references afford fuller information on each of these; name of his wife, date of marriage, names and other data of his children; dates of the death of any of the family, place of burial; names and histories of servants, *employés*, etc., etc.

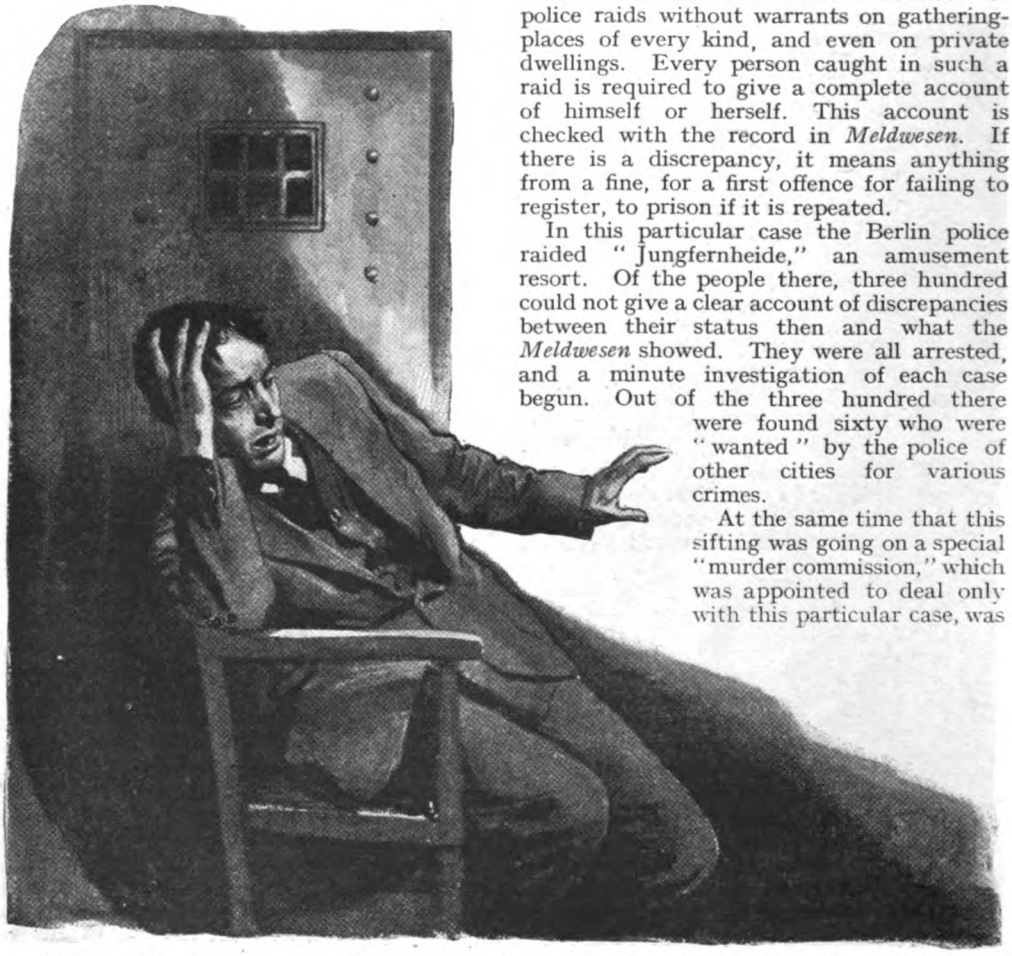
In the police headquarters at Berlin this *Meldwesen* department contains over twenty million cards to-day, occupies one hundred and fifty-eight rooms, requires two hundred and ninety *employés* — and is daily growing in size. The cards of names commencing with H alone take up ten rooms, S requiring seventeen rooms.

If Carl Schmidt has a criminal record there is a wealth of additional data about him on the file, including photographs, finger-prints, Bertillon data, and much information on his methods of crime, a list of accomplices and confederates, past and present, their personal relations to him other than in crime, etc., etc.

WHAT happens to any individual in Germany who fails to register can be seen in the working of the *Razzia* system, which is used by the police of Germany as a complement to the *Meldwesen*, and which the police of Berlin proceeded to use in the case of the strangled under-secretary on an unprecedented scale. The *Razzia* consists of police raids without warrants on gathering-places of every kind, and even on private dwellings. Every person caught in such a raid is required to give a complete account of himself or herself. This account is checked with the record in *Meldwesen*. If there is a discrepancy, it means anything from a fine, for a first offence for failing to register, to prison if it is repeated.

In this particular case the Berlin police raided "Jungfernheide," an amusement resort. Of the people there, three hundred could not give a clear account of discrepancies between their status then and what the *Meldwesen* showed. They were all arrested, and a minute investigation of each case begun. Out of the three hundred there were found sixty who were "wanted" by the police of other cities for various crimes.

At the same time that this sifting was going on a special "murder commission," which was appointed to deal only with this particular case, was



"The celebrated German police method of 'sweating,' or 'third degree,' which includes

proceeding with co-ordinating investigations. Such a commission, consisting of seven or eight men as a rule, but calling in as many others as necessary, usually includes three or four of the higher officials of the detective force, a police surgeon, a photographer, and one or two men from some highly-specialized detective staff. There are thirty-one such staffs, each sharply specialized, and its members practically never go outside their specialities.

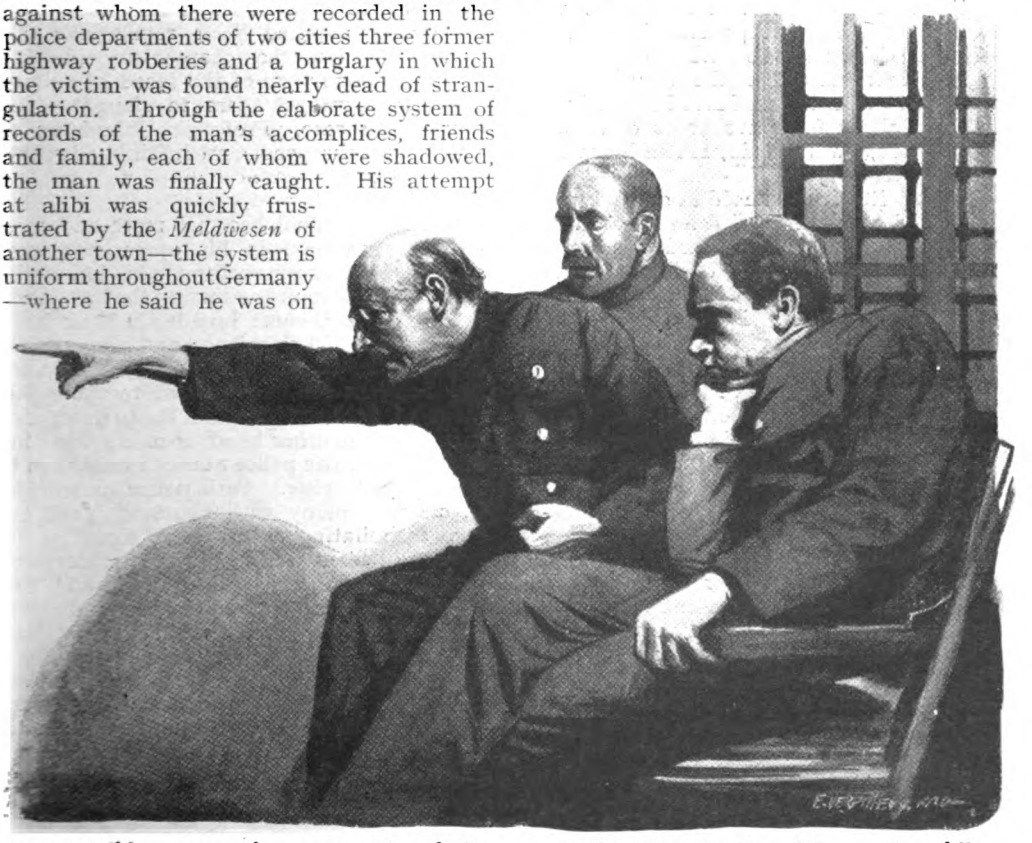
To the special commission in this case were added two members of a staff which specialized on highway robberies, and another detective who had made a study of stranglers. All these men went to work sifting out the small mountain of cards dealing with every individual who could even in the remotest way be suspected of a possible connection with the murder of Under-Secretary Rheinthal. Meanwhile forty-two individuals caught in the " Jungfernheide " were waiting in prison, together with some other suspects, arrested without warrant or charge.

THE residuum of all this searching was that one of the young women detained was found to be the mistress of a man against whom there were recorded in the police departments of two cities three former highway robberies and a burglary in which the victim was found nearly dead of strangulation. Through the elaborate system of records of the man's accomplices, friends and family, each of whom were shadowed, the man was finally caught. His attempt at alibi was quickly frustrated by the *Meldwesen* of another town—the system is uniform throughout Germany—where he said he was on the night of the murder. Once in the clutches of the police the celebrated German police method of "sweating," or "third degree," which includes every possible means of coercion, pinned the man to the crime itself and he confessed.

Clearly, then, what solved the Rheinthal mystery was a machine, which is what the German passion for organization produces, rather than a team, as in the case of Scotland Yard. With the Germans, organization reduces its human element to cogs and parts of an automaton. In England it binds human beings into a group, which retains initiative on the part of the individual and adds to it the increased competence of the group. In France, organization is the minor fact, the individual is everything.

MAN-HUNTING IN AUSTRIA.

In Vienna the detective system can draw on neither a people gifted with regimentalized efficiency, nor the individual efficiency of the Scotland Yard man or of the French detective. Yet the man-hunting done by the Vienna police equals in efficiency any other in Europe. For, in the professorial chairs, the laboratories, and the research



every possible means of coercion, pinned the man to the crime itself and he confessed."

departments of Austrian universities man-hunting has attained its highest development. Whatever the explanation the fact is that in Vienna—which acts for all Austria—it is not organization or the individual detective or a marvellous machine that hunts the criminal most successfully, but modern science with its microscope, chemical reagents, the orderly processes of inductive reasoning, carried out for the most part by university professors, and only a minimum contribution on the part of the professional detective.

LET us illustrate with the murder and robbery of a millionaire recluse who lived in a villa on the border of Wiener Wald. He was found dead in his barn, his skull crushed in with some blunt instrument which could not be found. The only clue left by the murderer was an ordinary workman's cap.

Dr. Gross in his celebrated work on criminal investigation, which is the most exhaustive study of the science of man-hunting in existence, stresses the importance of hairs and dust as clues. The inside of the cap, therefore, was carefully examined and two hairs found, which were not those of the murdered man. These hairs were placed under microscope examination, experts called in, and the following was scientifically ascertained as the description of the man to whom those hairs belonged :—

"Man about forty-five years old, robust constitution, turning bald, brown hair nearly grey and recently cut."

The cap itself was placed in a tough paper bag, which was then sealed and beaten with a stick. When it was opened again there was dust at the bottom of the bag. This dust was microscopically examined and chemically analyzed. Disregarding the elements that came obviously from the floor of the barn where the cap was found, it was discovered that there predominated wood-dust, such as is found in the shop of a carpenter; also minute particles of glue. The combination pointed to a wood-joiner.

There was such a man living near the scene of the crime, who also answered to the description derived from the two hairs, a man of morose temperament rendered desperate by drink and poverty. A search of his premises for the instrument which might have caused the death of the murdered man yielded a hammer and two mortar pestles. The hammer with its octagonal nose was found incapable of inflicting the shape of the wound in the man's skull. The pestles fitted. There were two of them, an iron one rusted in spots and a polished brass one. The rust spots on the iron one were found on chemical analysis to be due to water. But under the metal polish of the brass pestle, when it was carefully scraped away, were found remnants of stains which on analysis and microscopic examination proved to be blood. By a system of reagents developed by Professor Uhlenhut, the blood was found to be that of the murdered man. After the investigation had proceeded a little further the murderer broke down and confessed his guilt.

Nothing is too small or insignificant to furnish clues to the Vienna school of laboratory detectives. The marks of teeth on a cigar-holder left on the scene of the murder were found to indicate unusually long canines, a clue which led to the murderer. The dust found in pocket-knives or clasp-knives with which crimes had been committed brought many criminals to justice wholly through laboratory methods. Through the chemical reagents developed by Professor Uhlenhut, blood-stains, not only of human beings, but even of animals, can be differentiated. Nor are these delicate tests used only in important cases. In accordance with recent food regulations in Austria, farmers were for a time forbidden to kill young calves and pigs. When Government agents found some farmers with blood-stains on their aprons and suspected them of having violated food regulations, the farmers denied the charges by insisting that the stains were of the blood of animals the law permitted them to slaughter. In every such case, Professor Uhlenhut's reagent was employed, and infallibly brought out the truth.

AS the criminal becomes more and more international in his operations, more and more cosmopolitan in his knowledge of the ways of man-hunters, so the latter, too, are forced to become broader in their hunting methods. The science and some of the organization technique of the Austrians and the Germans are being added to the equipment of Scotland Yard. Republican Germany, on the other hand, is modifying some of the autocratic police abuses established by an imperial *régime*. Paris police are working in close harmony with Scotland Yard and are assimilating from them some of the lessons of team work. Vienna is borrowing German organization and Scotland Yard emphasis on the selection of the raw material of its detective force, and has surpassed Scotland Yard in the educational training it now gives its operatives. Some day there may even come true the dream of several visionaries among police chiefs, that in the Hague or in some other city there will soon be an international police headquarters from which man-hunting in Europe will proceed on an international scope and with the combined skill of all the nations.

Santa Claus

by LYNN DOYLE

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GILLETT·R.I·

THERE'S about forty-seven different ways of gettin' into debt, but only the one way of gettin' out of it, as far as I ever heard. Matthew Savage had thried the most of the forty-seven in his time, an' done well at them all, him havin' a wife an' seven small childher to help him at it; an' then instead of puttin' his nose down to the grindstone an' takin' the one way out, here doesn't he turn to lame Arthur M'Craw, the moneylender.

Now Matthew would ha' knowed the sort of M'Craw as well as the rest of us, an' would never ha' got bogged with him the way he did but for a piece of what looked like good luck, an' turned out to be bad.

I suppose just to balance the long head he had on him, Arthur, as he grew older, was afflicted with a very uncertain kind of a heart, an' likely havin' a notion that he mightn't do just as well in the next world as he'd done in this one, he used to get very frightened when anything went wrong with the heart, an' a deal softer with his clients —till the attack was over. I've heard of him takin' as low as twenty per cent. at a settlement afther a bad turn of palpitation. Matthew Savage, bein' in a by-ordinary hole for twenty pounds, years before, had borrowed off Arthur; an' Arthur havin' a bad turn of the heart at the time had treated him extra well. From that on Matthew would hear no harm of M'Craw; an' when the shop-keepers began to press him outrageous he turned to Arthur again.

But Matthew hadn't much hope of Arthur, all the same; for it was a bigger thing he wanted this time; an' besides, there was a queer kink in him that always stood again him borrowin'.

"I'll sign no law papers," he'd still say. "My father was near ruined over a law paper he signed. Ye'll have to take an honest man's word."

Many a man did, too, for an honest poor fellow Matthew was; but it was hardly to be expected of Arthur M'Craw. But, lo an' behold ye, here doesn't he throw out to Matthew every penny he wanted, an' never asked the scrape of a pen.

Now that looks queer; but it wasn't, an' ye'll see why presently.

Ye must know that Arthur's land marched with Matthew's, an' their two houses were undher the one roof. They used to be the double gate-house on the Carr demesne, before horse-racin' broke the family an' the estate was sold. Queer old-fashioned houses they were, with high tiled roofs, an' wee diamond-paned windows, an' big hearths ye could burn a tree in. The two together would make one grand house, an' the two farms one great farm; an' there was Arthur's notion in lendin' poor Savage on the terms he did. He lent him, an' he lent him, till Matthew had a hundhred an' fifty pounds from him, an' accordin' to Arthur there was another hundhred an' fifty due for intherest —an' then he lit on him! If Mr. Savage didn't find it convenient to pay, Mr. Savage must give a mortgage for three hundhred.

It fair knocked the wind out of Matthew. He come up to me that night—a dirty November night it was—an' told me the whole story.

"Do ye mean to tell me," sez I, "that Arthur has nothin' to show for all he has lent ye?"

"Not a line," sez Matthew. "Only my bare word. I wouldn't ha' took the money but for that."

"I see," sez I. "Arthur's cute; there's no doubt he's cute—but he's been too cute this time, an' now ye have him. Give him no mortgage, an' give him only the bare money ye got off him, an' that in your own good time. He can't lay a finger on ye if ye never give him nothin'."

But Matthew cried out again this altogether. He'd pay the last penny should he work his fingers to the bone. But a

mortgage he would not give; no, he would not; that he was determined on.

I spoke again mortgages very bitther myself; an' he agreed with every word I said. Away he went in the pourin' rain—an' caught a cold that hung on him an' turned to peumonia an' killed him. A week afther the funeral I made an excuse down to Mrs. Savage's with a bit of berried holly for the childher, meanin' to put her up to payin' Arthur nothin' at all; an' would ye believe it, but Matthew had given him a mortgage two days before he lay down.

"Are ye sure he did give the mortgage?" sez I, "an' that Arthur's not makin' up a story?"

"I seen it," sez she. "I seen it with my own eyes. Arthur was in about it last night. He wouldn't let it out of his hands, but he let me read it over his shouldher. It was dhrew up by Fitzsimmons, the lawyer, for I seen his name on it. An' it's for three hundhred pounds—three hundhred pounds, an' my man never had the half of it from him. Oh! Pat, Pat! Seven wee fatherless childher, an' nothin' for us but the roadside!"

"He's for puttin' ye out, then?" sez I.

"He'll let me have another hundhred if I give him quiet possession," sez she; "an' that's the best he'll do, though I went down on my bended knees to him last night. Oh! what'll become of us at all, at all!"

"Do nothin' till ye hear from me," sez I, risin' to go. "I'll step in to Mr. Anthony, the solicitor, an' hear what he has to say. Don't be uneasy, now. He'll not charge ye anythin'." An' I knew he wouldn't; for Mr. Anthony was a hot-headed wee body, but there wasn't a mean dhrop in him.

I TOLD Mr. Anthony the whole story the next day in his own office in Ballygullion, an' then sat back in my chair to listen to him cursin' Arthur. For Mr. Anthony was inclined to swear a bit when he got wound up.

But the boot was on the other foot, if ye please. A lawyer's notion of things is very different from anybody else's. He cursed Matthew for a fool for I suppose five minutes, an' then he spent another five minutes admirin' Arthur's cleverness.

"He'd have made a great solicitor, that man," sez he. "Blast me, Pat, but there's a good deal stupider men on the Bench. An' do you mark the way he led poor Savage on, tradin' on his honesty? I know somethin' of human nature, mind ye, an' I'm a child to him, begad, a child. An' then when he gets the man far enough in, he nails him with a mortgage. Beautiful! He deserves to get the place, confound me if he doesn't! It would be a shame to keep him out of it."

"If that's the way of it, I'll not ask ye to intherfere, Mr. Anthony," sez I, a bit short. For I was vexed with him.

"Sit down now, ye old fool," sez he. "I've just been lookin' at the matther in a professional way. An' say what you like, it's a neat bit of work. We'll come down to business now. Does the widow want to engage me?"

"She does, Mr. Anthony," sez I. "But she doesn't want to pay ye."

"There's deuced little business about that, Pat," sez he. "Well, well, thrade has been good lately, but dull; not even a breach of promise case to liven things up a bit. An' I'll maybe knock some fun out of Arthur. Ye say the mortgage is good?"

"I think so," sez I. "Fitzsimmons dhrew it."

"It'll be all right an' tight, then," sez Mr. Anthony. "There's only one other man in Ballygullion can dhraft a deed betther than the same Fitzsimmons. She'll have to pay or go out."

"She can't pay, I tell ye, Mr. Anthony," sez I. "But should she go out or be put out? That's what I want to know."

"She'd betther go out on the terms Arthur is offering," sez he. "She'd get no such terms if the land didn't lie alongside his. If he has to put her out she'll have little or nothing left. There'd be some rascal of an auctioneer to pay—I wish my father had made me an auctioneer—an' a few triflin' legal expenses. Wait now, Pat. Hasn't she well-to-do friends? Wouldn't they lend her the money?"

"The most they'll promise among them is a hundhred," sez I. "They were in with Matthew before, an' glad to get out."

"Well, couldn't she pay the other two hundhred?" sez Mr. Anthony, "an' clear off the mortgage?"

"She could not, Mr. Anthony," sez I. "The woman's penniless. She hasn't as much in the house this minit as'll buy the childher a Christmas puddin'."

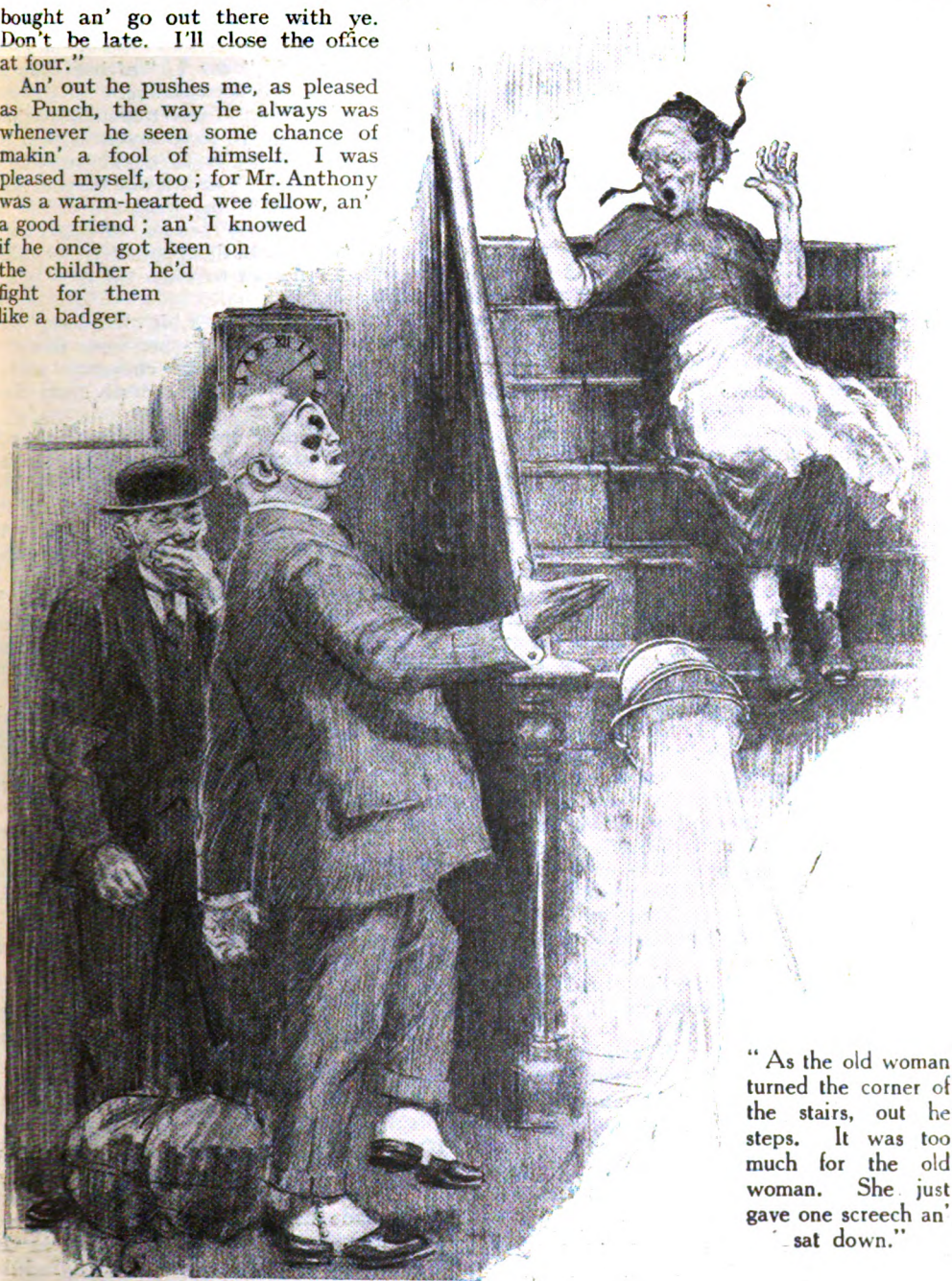
"Lord bless us, Pat!" sez Mr. Anthony, all in a flusther. "Is it as bad as that? Are there many of them?"

"Only seven," sez I.

"Well, well!" sez Mr. Anthony, rumplin' up his hair with his hands. "An' me as old a man as Matthew, an' not even married yet. It's a shame, Pat; blast me, but it's a shame. They'll have their Christmas puddin', an' they'll have Christmas presents, every one of them. Wait now! Begad, I've a notion. I'll get a false face an' go out an' do Father Christmas for them, an' I can have a chat with Mrs. Matthew aftherwards. Did ye ever see me actin', Pat? I'm good at it, mind ye. There's times I think I'd ha' made a name for myself on the stage. Come back for me about dusk, an' I'll have the things

bought an' go out there with ye. Don't be late. I'll close the office at four."

An' out he pushes me, as pleased as Punch, the way he always was whenever he seen some chance of makin' a fool of himself. I was pleased myself, too; for Mr. Anthony was a warm-hearted wee fellow, an' a good friend; an' I knowed if he once got keen on the childher he'd fight for them like a badger.



"As the old woman turned the corner of the stairs, out he steps. It was too much for the old woman. She just gave one screech an' sat down."

When I went back for him he was standin' in the hall waitin' for me, with a big parcel in his hand.

"Look at this," sez he, layin' down the parcel an' whippin' out a very wicked-lookin' false face, an' clappin' it on his face. "What do you think of it, Pat?" sez he. "It's hardly as pleasant a one as I'd like; but there has been a run on false faces, an' it was the best I could do."

"You'll frighten the childher to death, Mr. Anthony," sez I. "That's all."

"Not a bit of me," sez he. "When I put out my tongue it changes the whole

expression. Hold on!" sez he, as there came a clatterin' down the stairs. "Here's the old charwoman. I'll thry it on her." An' just as the old woman turned the corner of the stairs, out he steps into the light of the landin' lamp.

"Ha, ha!" sez he, in a big deep voice away down in his chest, throwin' out one hand an' stampin' with his foot. In troth he wasn't bad. I've seen men in Pepper's Ghost do it a deal worse. But it was too much for the old woman. She just give one screech an' sat down. The bucket of wather in her hand leapt down the stairs three steps at a time, lit on the hall flags with a desperate blatther, an' poured itself about Mr. Anthony's legs as high as the ankles. I just lifted the parcel off the ground in time.

Mr. Anthony dashed out into the sthreet in a flash an' pulled off the false face.

"Did she know who it was, Pat?" sez he, very anxious-lookin'.

"How would she," sez I, "an' that thing over your face?"

"That's a good job," sez he, lookin' relieved. "She'd never have had any respect for me again; an' I couldn't have raised her wages less than half a crown a week. *The parcel!*" sez he, stoppin' short.

"I have it here," sez I. "It's quite safe."

"Did the water get at it?" sez he.

"Not a dhrop," sez I.

"Come on," sez he. "That's all right. The currants an' raisins would ha' stood it all right, but it would ha' played the deuce with the soft sugar. Be careful how ye handle that parcel, Pat. There's a half-pint of whisky in it. No, wait now—it's in the tail pocket of my coat. I gave that old fool a bit of a fright, I doubt. Never mind; I can always sack the office boy for doin' it. Don't say a word to me now for a while. There's two or three bits of rhymes I've made up, an' I want to be sure I have them off."

I COULD hear him muttherin' to himself as he walked along; an' every now an' then he'd give a snirt of a laugh.

"It'll be good this, Pat," sez he; "damme, it'll be good! The children'll like it. You'll like it yourself. I wish I'd had a bit more time. I could have more verses made up, an' have dhressed myself right."

"Now, ye'll be just grand, Mr. Anthony," sez I, buttherin' him.

"I'll not be bad, now, Pat," sez he, "will I? But I could make improvements. Let me think a minit. Tell me, Pat," sez he, all excited, "isn't there big, old-fashioned chimneys in the Carr gatehouse cottages?"

"Aye, as big as would do a facthory boiler," sez I. "But what about it?"

"Couldn't I go down it," sez he, "like the real Santa Claus? It would just crown the whole thing. An' the children would love it."

"They would," sez I, "afther they had come out of the convulsions."

"Aye," sez he, "I never thought of that."

"By the time ye have seven of your own these things'll begin to occur to ye, Mr. Anthony," sez I; "or it'll not be your wife's fault if they don't, any way."

"It's a pity, too," sez he. I could tell by his voice he was all disappointed. "Couldn't we tell the mother to warn them?" sez he, perkin' up.

"It wouldn't make a bit of differs," sez I. "By the time ye had rasped your face down fifteen feet of a sooty chimney ye'd be lookin' a deal liker the divil than Santy Claus."

"That's right," sez he, "that's right; an' besides, it would play puck with the false face. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll lower the parcel down the chimney, an' then I'll come in by the front door an' tell them they should have had the chimney swept for me. That's a good notion, Pat," sez he. "Eh? I mayn't have any of my own, but what I don't know about children isn't worth talkin' about. Now don't say another word. That's what we'll do. You go in an' prepare Mrs. Matthew."

"They'll hear us on the roof," sez I—though I knowed I was only wastin' my breath.

"Let them," sez Mr. Anthony. "They'll think it's reindeer."

"They'll think it's a Clydesdale horse," sez I, "an' me with my workin' boots on."

"You'll not need to come on the roof," sez he. "I can manage by myself."

"Troth, an' ye won't," sez I. "I'm not goin' to run the risk of havin' the only decent solicitor in Ballygullion breakin' his neck."

"That's right, Pat," sez Mr. Anthony, all pleased. "That's right. I would be missed, I believe. Away in, now," sez he, "an' warn Mrs. Matthew. I'll be tyin' on the false face."

SO in I goes an' tells Mrs. Matthew the piece; an' troth, though she was in poor enough heart, as ye may guess, the notion of it made her laugh, an' she promised to warn all the young ones that wasn't in their beds, an' told me where to find a laddher, an' a rope to lower the parcel with.

"Come on, now, Mr. Anthony," sez I, puttin' the laddher again the wall afther I had the parcel tied to the rope. "An' do you hold my coat-tails when I'm lowerin' this."

"No," sez he, "I'll go first an' carry the parcel. I've a great head on a high place." An' up the laddher he goes.

"What's holdin' me, Pat?" sez he, stoppin' about the second step. "Am I caught in a nail? No," sez he; "I'm standin' on my overcoat. Wait till I throw this cursed thing off. Come on."

"For Heaven's sake, Mr. Anthony," sez I to him when we got to the roof, "don't thry to walk along the ridge tiles! Sit down an' slither along."

"I suppose I'd betther," sez he. "I could walk it, mind ye, but for the parcel. An' if I was sure my glasses would stay on my nose in this wind I could walk it any way."

"Now slither," sez I. "It'll be safer." But even as it was I was holdin' my breath till we were safe at the chimney.

"Lower away now," sez I, in a whisper, "an' keep to this side, or Arthur M'Craw'll have the eatin' of the puddin'."

"How?" sez he. "Is there no division?"

"Not till near the bottom," sez I.

"I'll stand on the copin', then," sez he, "to make sure." An' before I could catch him he had speeled up.

"Come down out of that, Mr. Anthony," sez I; for the wits was near frightened out of me. I could just make him out again the sky, perched there like a swallow on a telegraph wire. "Ye'll break your neck, I tell ye."

"Blethers!" sez he. "Gimme the parcel. Shure I could walk round the edge of a mill chimley." An' with that a brick turns undher his foot an' he disappears with a yell.

"Holy angels!" sez I to myself, "he'll be desthroyed!" An' away I goes slitherin' along to the laddher, thinkin' in all the confusion how well it was I'd told Mrs. Matthew to damp down the fire.

I DASHED into the kitchen with my heart jumpin' out of my mouth, thinkin' to find Mr. Anthony with not less than a broken leg, an' the childher in hysterics, an' behold ye they were all sittin' round the fire an' not a sign of him at all!

"What's wrong?" sez Mrs. Matthew, leppin' up, all scared.

"He's fell down!" sez I. "He's stuck in the chimley! Wait till I look." But when I put in my head an' looked up, I could see a glimmer of sky, an' there it come on me in a flash.

"He's gone into Arthur's!" sez I, dhrawin' back an' gapin' at Mrs. Matthew. "What's to be done? Is Arthur at home? Could we break the door?"

"Arthur's in," sez she. "Run yourself. I would not go near him for ten pound."

Out I goes, an' to Arthur's door. The latch lifted an' in I went. There was only one bit of a candle burnin', but I could see ould Arthur lyin' on the floor, an' what was left of Mr. Anthony bendin' over him. There was more of Mr. Anthony left than ye'd have expected. The nose of the false face had gone, an' one sleeve of his jacket, an' if the back of his breeches was as far gone as the front he was in no great trim to go to a party; but I could tell by him there was no bones broke.

"Hush!" sez he, as I went to speak; "he's comin' round. Out wi' ye, Pat." An' he pulled me out an' closed the door.

"Are ye anythin' the worse, Mr. Anthony?" sez I. "No? Well, ye might ha' been killed, that's all. I told ye what would happen."

"Happen," sez he, "*happen?* Did you not see that I did it on purpose?"

"*On purpose!*" sez I. For I could not hold my tongue in the face of that.

"To be sure," sez he, never turnin' a hair. "It was you talkin' of the danger of goin' to Arthur's side that put it in my head. I thought I'd give old Arthur a fright."

"Aye, well, ye did that," sez I.

"I did," sez he. "An' he give me one, too. I thought he was gone. If I hadn't seen his bottle of drops on the dresser an' pushed a dose into him, he was away. But I think he's all right. Look in, Pat."

I looked, an' there was Arthur dotterin' round the kitchen, very feeble, searchin' for somethin' on the floor.

"That's all right," sez Mr. Anthony, when I told him. "He'll do now." An' then he begins to dance round an' laugh. "He took me for the divil," sez he. "I landed right in the middle of the fire! It's well he's a miser, or I'd been cremated. The half-pint broke on the way down, an' the blue flames was whiffin' round me as if I was a plum-puddin'. It's no wondher Arthur was scared. I must have looked very like the real thing. It's the best bit of actin' ever I did in my life."

"What did he do, Mr. Anthony?" sez I, chucklin' to myself. For, troth, I was no way sorry for the old villain.

"He just let two prayers an' a yell out of him, an' dropped," sez Mr. Anthony. "It's a good job I saw the medicine," sez he, soberin' down a bit. "But never mind. All's well that ends well. It was a great thought, Pat, wasn't it? I have a head on me. It's well ye thought of gettin' me into this case."

"I don't see what good this'll do in the case," sez I.

"Do ye not, ye old dunderhead?" sez he, in great heart. "Listen, then. I'm goin' in to Arthur in about five minutes as Mrs. Matthew's solicithor to make a settlement, an' with the fright he's got, an' his heart fluttherin' like a bird in a basket, it'll be a queer thing if I don't cut him down half; an' if her friends won't lend her that

much I'll do it myself. It's a great scheme," sez he, " to be planned out all in a second on the top of a chimley." An' upon my soul, by this time I think he believed it.

" Ye'll not make much of him," sez I. " He'll think the whole thing was a dhream. The divil doesn't go about these times, the way he used to."

" Does he not ? " sez he. " Well, he was there to-night, any way, an' brought this away with him." And he pulls a paper out of his pocket an' shoves it into my face. " The mortgage," sez he ; " Arthur was readin' it when he fell."

" That's dangerous, Mr. Anthony," sez I, lookin' at him a bit scared.

" Blethers ! " sez he, but I could tell by his voice he was very much of the same opinion. " Any way, I'll have to go through with it now. Come into Mrs. Matthew's till I get myself straited up."

" Ye can't go in with them trousers on ye," sez I, sthrikin' a match.

" I suppose I couldn't," sez he. " Never mind. I'll put on my overcoat. Bring me some water out to the yard, till I wash my hands. My face is all right, I think," sez he, feelin' the end of his nose a bit gingerly. " Tell Mrs. Matthew to put the childher to bed, an' say I'll be in presently with news. An', Pat," sez he, " fetch a candle to the stable till I read this document. Blast it! I wish I had left it alone ! It was the one oversight in a great plan."

But when I went back to him in the stable he was as full of himself again as ever.

" Come you in to Arthur's when you hear me knockin' on the wall," sez he, " an' you'll witness the overthrow of that old grabber. He's cute—he's cute ; but he hasn't a chance with me. Damme," sez he, " when my brain's in good order I could bamboozle Napoleon ! " An' away he goes.

I COULDN'T tell ye how long it was till he knocked, I was that busy tellin' Mrs. Matthew lies ; for I couldn't satisfy her ; but at last the knock came. When I went in Arthur was sittin' at the table, very white an' shook-lookin', an' Mr. Anthony on the other side of it with a paper in front of him.

" Pat," sez Mr. Anthony, " I want you to witness this document, an' a very creditable document to Mr. M'Craw it is. It has come into his head that he's been a bit hard on Mrs. Savage, an' mightn't have luck with it, an' he's releasing her for one hundred an' fifty pounds, just the actual amount he says he lent her husband, an' makin' her a present of all costs an' interest. They came to another one hundred an' fifty pounds, an' Mr. Savage had given Mr. M'Craw a mortgage for three hundred. Just at the moment Mr. M'Craw can't lay his hands on the mortgage, but we'll not press for that as he is acting so generously."

" He's actin' well," sez I ; " an' a blessin'll follow him—I hope it'll be a long while catchin' up with him," I put in undher my breath. " Where'll I sign, Mr. Anthony ? "

" Wait a second," sez Mr. Anthony, " Mr. M'Craw must sign first. You're satisfied with the document, Mr. M'Craw ? "

" Reach me them drops," whispers Arthur. " Yes, I'm satisfied," sez he, puttin' down the glass, an' breakin' into a kind of a whine, " an' I think I'm actin' like a Christian an' a neighbour. I hope people will give in to that ; for it's at a heavy cost. But we must be Christians ; for who can tell when his hour will come ? "

" That's right," sez Mr. Anthony. " Sign here. Wait a minit, there's a mistake—there's a mistake in this. The date of the missing mortgage is the first of December, not the fifteenth."

" Ye wee idiot ! " sez I to meself.

I was right, too. Arthur jumps to his feet as if he had the heart of a bullock.

" How do *you* know that ? " sez he, lookin' hard at Mr. Anthony. " *What !* " he screams. " It was you ! I know ye now ; it was you, trickin' me an' humbuggin' me, was it ? But you'll pay, an' your client'll pay. I'll disbar ye, for theft an' fraud, ye murdherer ! Ye near killed me, an' ye would rob me, too. An' your client'll pay down three hundred pounds an' costs, or go. But first of all I'll deal with you."

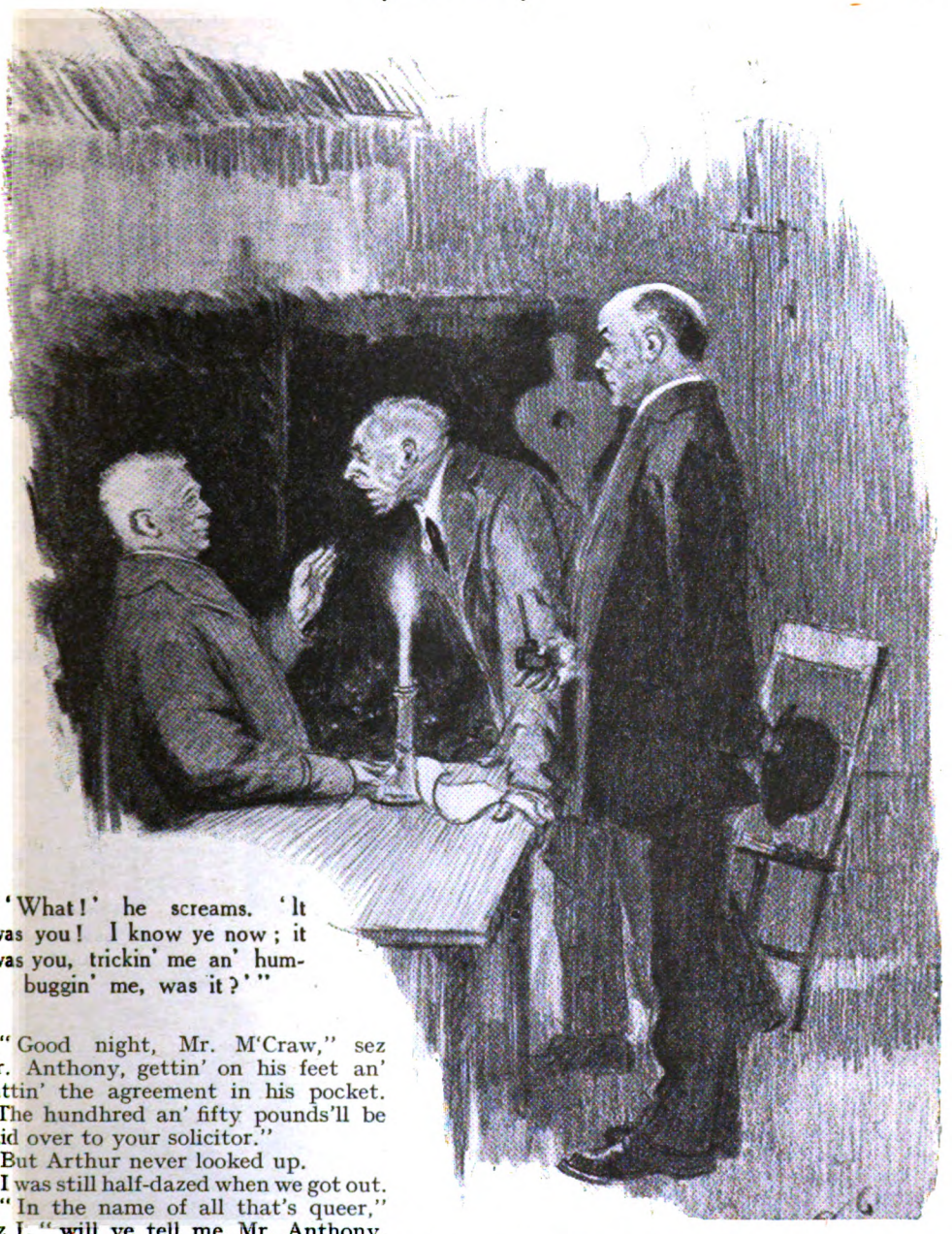
He takes a gulp at the dhrops again, an' sits down fair foamin' at the mouth. An' as for me, I was that vexed at Mr. Anthony that I could ha' kicked him round the kitchen.

But Mr. Anthony was as cool as a cucumber.

" Don't get excited, Mr. M'Craw," sez he. "I've done nothing unprofessional."("You've a cheek on ye ! " thinks I.) " I merely took a favourable opportunity of examining a vital document in the case. You can have it back ; or, better still, I'll hand it to your solicitor. I'll not lose it, you may be sure, seein' it's all you have to show for the money you allege you lent to Matthew Savage. An' I'm done with it," sez he ; " for I've read it from date to signature." Arthur never answered a word, but sat there lookin' very hard at him. " Come, now," sez Mr. Anthony, pushin' forward the agreement, " sign this, an' don't spoil a generous action by a little useless ill-temper."

" Ye may save your breath thryin' to bluff Arthur," thinks I. " He has you, an' he'll salt you. An' ye had the whole thing your own way, if ye'd kept your silly mouth shut."

Ye could ha' tied me with a straw when I seen Arthur takin' up the pen like a lamb an' signin'. I near spilled the ink-bottle, I was that keen to witness.



"'What!' he screams. 'It was you! I know ye now; it was you, trickin' me an' humbuggin' me, was it?'"

"Good night, Mr. M'Craw," sez Mr. Anthony, gettin' on his feet an' puttin' the agreement in his pocket. "The hundhred an' fifty pounds'll be paid over to your solicitor."

But Arthur never looked up.

I was still half-dazed when we got out.

"In the name of all that's queer," sez I, "will ye tell me, Mr. Anthony, why Arthur gave in when he had you in his hands?"

"I'll tell you why," sez Mr. Anthony. "Ye said this afthernoon that Matthew Savage always swore he'd never sign a mortgage. Well, he kept his word. The mortgage is a very nice mortgage, an' a credit to the lawyer that drew it. Except here an' there, I could hardly improve on it myself. But there's one thriflin' flaw in it, Pat. *It isn't signed!*

"I knew it," sez Mr. Anthony, dancin' round like a tin toy. "I knew Matthew had refused to sign at the last minit. I felt it in my bones. It flashed over me as I climbed up on the chimley. Damme," sez he, "I'll have a wee chimley built in my own back yard, an' walk round it whenever I meet a knotty case! Come on, till we tell Mrs. Matt."

But I could only stand still an' look at him with my mouth open.

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Ages

SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL K.C.

With a Character-Sketch by T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P.

AGE 2.
Photo. White.

AGE 3.
Photo. Wells & Grey.

Photo. AGE 4. *Smith.*

MARSHALL-HALL, whose name has been so much before the public recently, has a presence. More than six feet high, with the broad shoulders of a Hercules and something of the grace of an Apollo, with a long face with pronounced features, a large nose, large eyes, well chiselled and mobile lips, he might well claim to be one of the handsomest men of the Bar—and the Bar does not consist entirely, as writers of fiction, from Dickens downwards, suggest, of skeletons with pallid faces and owl-like eyes.

He is the athlete he looks. His golf is superb; I believe his cricket and his tennis and his shooting are also excellent; but I can only speak of his golf from personal experience. What is the secret of the strange and somewhat mixed

feeling there is about him? He has great courage, vehement zeal, a resounding and often touching eloquence—I thought his use of the quotation from "Othello" in his speech for Mr. Greenwood was wonderfully touching. But very sober people sometimes shake their heads and black-letter lawyers purse their lips now and then when his name is mentioned. Is it because he has the defects of his fiery qualities and of his hot tongue, and that he cannot brook easily pompous interruptions by staid judges? I suspect there must be a drop of Irish somewhere in a temperament so ebullient and a temper so susceptible. Anyhow, if I wanted to be defended from murder, he's the advocate I'd choose!

I may say that if he were not a barrister he might have made a fortune as an art dealer. He knows all about all sorts of collecting—old silver, pictures, ivories, etc. And if he hadn't been a lawyer and a collector, he might have made a great doctor. That is always one of his strong points when he is in a poison case. He has studied medicine profoundly, which indeed is natural, for his father was a doctor in Brighton with a big practice, and that brilliant and receptive young son of his took in from his lips much of the medical lore which has stood him in such good stead. Marshall-Hall makes enemies, I dare say—most strong temperaments do—but he makes warm friends—of whom I'm glad to be one.

AGE 18.
Photo. Clark.

AGE 20.
Photo. Bucher.

PRESENT DAY—AGE 62.
Photo. Park.

God's Truth

by

H. C. McNEILE ("SAPPER")

ILLUSTRATED BY NORAH SCHLEGEL

I.

THE man looked up as the bushes parted, and a girl stepped into the little glade. A glint of sunshine just caught her face and hair as she stood, watching him with a slight frown, and instinctively he took off his hat. Below them a brook gurgled and bubbled its cheerful way through the heat of the summer afternoon; above their heads a blackbird was pouring out his song ecstatically. And in the glade itself was the awkward silence of two unintroduced humans, who have met in such circumstances as render silence foolish.

The glade was far away from the beaten track, and the man had wandered there aimlessly that afternoon. He had an

"'I hope I'm not trespassing,' he remarked. 'Unless you're you are. The place is

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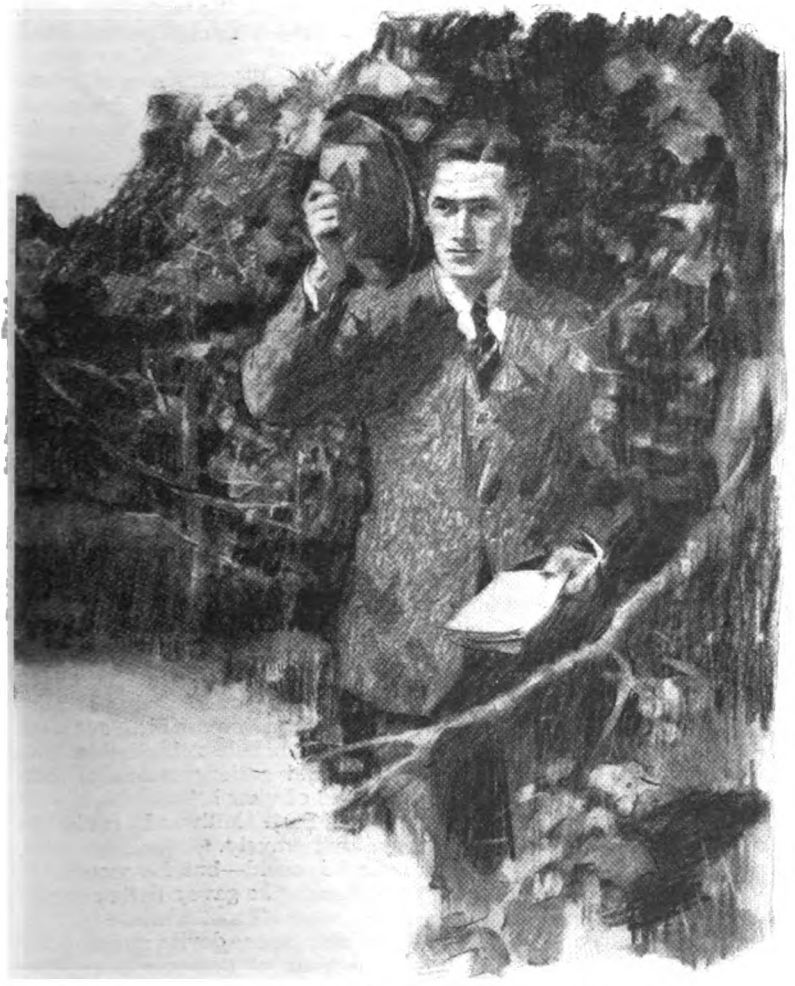
uncomfortable feeling that he had passed at least two notice-boards stating that " Trespassers will be prosecuted." But the coolness of the woods had lured him on, and then he had come to the stream and followed it. It had led him to the glade—just a little clearing in the heart of the big trees—with thick undergrowth screening it from outside view. And there he had lit his pipe and endeavoured to concentrate on the destiny of his hero and heroine, who, at the moment, refused point-blank to behave as he considered a well-written hero and heroine should behave.

The glade had not helped him. First a rabbit had appeared on the scene and contemplated him gravely; and then the blackbird—or was it a thrush?—had commenced its song. It struck him with a feeling akin to surprise that a man, acknowledged by all the critics to be one of the cleverest of the younger generation of authors, should not know the difference between the song of a blackbird and that of a thrush. However, the bird itself settled the question by obligingly showing itself, and once again he concentrated on his heroine.

She was quite up to his usual form as far as he had got—one of his typical heroines, who had earned him the reputation of being an uncompromising realist. He saw life as it was, and he wrote it down on paper, strongly flavoured with a delightful cynicism which was peculiarly his own. At least, so he had constantly been told by a host of admirers.

But this particular heroine showed a strong desire to break out on a line of her own. She had positive hankerings after marriage with a penniless subaltern, which is all right in theory, but in practice is simply not done. Not by a realist. At least, if it is, the result is a foregone conclusion. And he wanted her to live as happily ever after as is possible in the world he sketched—the real world. Not the imaginary one of the idealists—that he scorned. The truth was all-important; to sacrifice it for a sugar and spice effect struck him as cowardly—worse still, as being false to his art. And he was a conscientious artist of his own school.

It was just as he had lit his second pipe that the girl, swinging a sunbonnet in her hand, provided the third interruption. She was an amazingly pretty girl—that he noticed at once; under her arm she held a book—that he noticed



blind,' she answered, uncompromisingly, 'you must know that stiff with notice-boards.'"

immediately afterwards; for the book had a very familiar paper wrapper on it; the book was his own latest novel. And he liked pretty girls who read his books, even though he was a realist.

"I hope I'm not trespassing," he remarked, at length.

"Unless you're blind," she answered, uncompromisingly, "you must know that you are. The place is stiff with notice-boards."

He bowed. "I'm sorry," he said, gravely. "I don't think I've done any damage, and it's so perfectly lovely in these woods that I wandered on aimlessly."

The frown gradually relaxed, and she came a few steps towards him.

"They are lovely, aren't they?" she agreed. "And this spot is the most perfect of all."

"Do they belong to you?"

"To my father," she said. "We live up at the Hall."

"A delightful house. I saw it from the road as I motored past. And then I came in here to try and think. My heroine is proving most intractable. I spoil paper, by way of something to do," he explained, seeing the puzzled look in her eyes.

"Oh! an author!" She regarded him with a new interest. "What does the poor woman want to do?"

"Marry a hopelessly ineligible fellow merely because she imagines herself in love with him."

"Merely!" The girl looked at him curiously. "Isn't that a good enough reason?"

"In a book, perhaps," he smiled. "But not in real life."

"Oh! you're wrong, you're wrong." With a little scornful laugh she threw the book she was carrying—his book—on the ground. "You're like that man—Basil Millward." She pointed an accusing finger at the familiar paper wrapper. "Realism—realism—at least, what he imagines to be realism! And all he does is to write things that hurt."

"Yet you read his books," remarked the man, gravely.

"Oh! I read them—yes," she cried. "But I hate them."

HE knocked out the ashes of his pipe, and started to fill it again. This was another side of the picture with a vengeance.

"I've read 'em, too," he said, casually. "And I don't think they struck me that way. Why do you hate them?"

"Because they're so cruel; because they're so true."

"The truth is cruel more often than not."

"That's why he oughtn't to write it."

"Rather a Bolshevik suggestion that, isn't it?" Through the blue smoke curling up from his pipe he watched her critically.

"Why?" she demanded. "We don't want the truth in what we read; we get that without reading. We want what ought to be the truth—beauty, love, kindliness. We want to see visions and dream dreams. We want to forget. Don't you see? Don't you understand that? That's why Barrie is so wonderful. We know it isn't true—that it's only a fantasy. But he makes us think it is—for two hours."

His pipe forgotten—he was staring at her now with unfeigned interest.

"But surely," he began, "an author has no right to paint a world of make-believe. 'Each in his separate star shall draw the thing as he sees it, for the God of things as they are.'" He quoted the tag with a smile. What did this decided young person think of Kipling?

"But he's an idealist!" she cried, "one of the greatest we have. He dreams in Empires. Don't you see that the realist only follows? The big man—the idealist—leads. His ideals may be wrong, impossible; but he's tried. He's not a plagiarist, anyway."

"Good Lord!" exploded the man. "Do you mean to say that you consider a man who writes the truth is a plagiarist?"

"Well, he's copying, isn't he?" She stared at him defiantly. "He's only a glorified journalist."

"My sacred aunt!" he muttered. "You're a dangerous revolutionary."

She laughed, and after a moment or two he joined in.

"I suppose I'm young and foolish," she remarked. "And also I'm getting out of my depth. But what I do feel most strongly is this. There's so little beauty and pleasure in this world, that the man who can do it should add to it. There are ideals, and they're glossed over to-day in real life by every sort of rottenness. Can't the men like Basil Millward try and keep them alive? Can't they lead instead of following? Isn't it better to paint an impossible love in a cottage with your hopeless ineligible than picture a successful society marriage from the worldly point of view?"

"You think Basil Millward could do that?" he asked, gravely.

"Of course he could—but he won't. It wouldn't pay him." She gave a little scornful smile.

"Probably the poor devil must live," murmured the man, "however incomprehensible the necessity. Besides, I don't think it's quite his style, is it—the fairy story stunt?"

" But it isn't a fairy story, I tell you." She stamped her foot. " It's the truth—the real truth. That's the falsehood." Again she pointed at the offending novel, lying in mute resignation between them.

He stared at her with thoughtful eyes. " I see," he remarked, at length. " I see, oh lady of the decided views ! And might I ask—without being impertinent—if you propose to practise what you preach ? " He pointed at the diamond ring on the third finger of her left hand.

She blushed slightly and nodded. " If by that you mean—am I marrying the man I love—yes."

" I don't quite mean that," he said, with a faint smile. " This lucky man—is he the hopelessly ineligible fellow of my recalcitrant heroine ? "

" He hasn't got any money," she answered, defiantly. " But if there is love nothing else matters." And then suddenly she pulled herself up short. " You know, this is the most extraordinary conversation between two complete strangers."

" Is it ? " said the man, casually. " I hadn't noticed it. It struck me as being peculiarly interesting. And what does your future husband do to sustain body and soul ?"

" He's an engineer," she answered. " And I know he's bound to get on. Though——" She broke off, frowning.

" Though your certainty is not shared by everyone in the picture." He appeared engrossed in relighting his pipe. " Quite so ; the older generation are most uncompromising realists sometimes. And when does the deed take place ? "

" As soon as he can get enough money." Then, apropos of nothing in particular, " Oh ! I hate the older generation. I bet you he is a soured, middle-aged man."

" Who—the engineer ? " He looked up in amazement; then a grin spread over his face. " Oh ! You mean Basil Millward. Forgive my denseness. For a moment I failed to follow you."

" On the rare occasions he has written of a happy marriage, he's done it with his tongue in his cheek."

" That's not fair," said the man, quickly. " You know you're exaggerating."

" Well, at any rate," cried the girl, " he's always insisting on the importance of money, and—and——" She kicked the offending tome viciously away from her.

For a moment there shone in the man's eyes a strange look of pity and understanding ; the story was so clear in spite of the gaps—perhaps because of them.

" I read him a little differently," he said, quietly. " It seems to me that under his so-called cynicism there lies a great longing for what might be. But every time his pen would stray in that direction he comes up against the inexorable fact that—it isn't. And maybe he feels that it is better—more honest—not to paint a lie, which perhaps would deceive ; would make people—some people—think it was the truth. Perhaps he knows that only to the very few does God grant a love which is all-sufficing ; and, what is more important, that from century to century the very many refuse to believe that fact. They go on trying ; they go on failing—because they've started wrong. Just for a while love is enough—and then——" He knocked out his pipe against a tree and put it in his pocket. " Unless, of course, they belong to the very few. But it's a big risk."

" A risk that is worth while every time," said the girl, steadily.

" So the very many have always said." He held out his hand. " Shall I make my heroine say it ? "

" Of course. What else could she say—if she's anything of a heroine ? "

" She's rather good up to date." He smiled at her, still holding her hand. " Thank you for not prosecuting me for trespassing—and for what you've said. And may I wish you luck ? "

" One of the very few ? "

" One of the very few," he said, gravely.

The next moment he had left her, and, at last, long after he was gone, the girl picked up the book, and sat down with her back against a tree. In the undergrowth near by the blackbird had started its song again ; the brook still gurgled on its merry way.

" One of the very few," she whispered under her breath. " Why, Jim, dear—of course we are ; of course."

And Basil Millward's book dropped unheeded on the grass beside her.

" AT the 'All, sir ? Mr. Bannister do live there. Children ? Only one—Miss Ruth. The son, 'e was killed in France."

The landlord of the Three Cows leaned genially over the bar.

" Good beer ? Aye—but not what it was before the war. No body in it, says I. All along of this 'ere danged Government."

The man put down his tankard and laughed.

" There are two things in this world, landlord, that never change. And I've heard 'em both this afternoon. One is the certainty of youth that it is always right——"

" They do be pig-headed at times," agreed Boniface. " And what would be the other, sir ? "

" The certainty of everybody that the Government is always wrong," said the man, with a smile.

And the worthy proprietor of the Three Cows was still pondering when the hum of the car had died away in the distance.

II.

"THE editor of *Dalton's Magazine* appears somewhat amused." That prince of literary agents, Mr. Hastings, leaned back in his chair and regarded Basil Millward with twinkling eyes.

"Oh, does he?" grunted Millward. "And what particularly has tickled his young fancy?"

"You, my dear man, you—and your short story. He rang me up on the telephone to find out when the marriage was going to take place."

"Hang his impertinence!" Millward grinned a little sheepishly. "Just because a fellow happens to write something a little different to his usual trash——"

"A little different!" Mr. Hastings laughed outright. "And then your special instructions about the illustrations tickled him to death. Do you really want to take the illustrator down to look at the scene of the tragedy?"

"I do," answered Millward, doggedly.

"And is the heroine to be looked at also?"

"No, confound you, you old scoundrel! I suppose I shall have to gratify your vulgar curiosity. That story is a wedding present."

"Indeed," murmured the other, politely. "How nice!"

"Don't be sarcastic, or I shall refuse to ask you to lunch. A fortnight ago, Hastings, I wandered in the country, and in the course of my wanderings I encountered a charming and lovely maiden, who was about to be married to an impecunious and, in all probability, totally unworthy engineer. But what particularly interested me about her, after her appearance, was her intense antipathy to the novels of one Basil Millward. She was carrying one when I met her, and in the intervals of our conversation she kicked it with vim and accuracy. In fact, she completely ruined the elegant paper cover which caused our one and only Williams so many sleepless nights."

"Dear, dear!" The twinkle was increasing in the agent's eyes.

"Needless to say, she did not know that I was Basil Millward, and I did not enlighten her on the point."

"It might have cramped her style, undoubtedly," conceded the other.

"I gathered that his realism was abhorrent to her; that she regarded him as a plagiarist of about the standing of a fifth-rate journalist. I further gathered that it was his bounden duty to write of love in a cottage. Ideals she wanted—not reality. Not the truth."

"I see," said Mr. Hastings, quietly. "She wanted someone to tell her she was right. Tell her the gamble was worth while."

"You've got it," answered Millward. "She's up against it at home—I could see that; and, by God, Hastings, it was like a breath of one's own childhood to hear her talk. The old simplicity came back——"

He rose and walked up and down the room with his hands thrust deep in his pockets.

"She's not an ignorant child," he went on, after a moment, "talking for effect. She's got brains, that girl; and——" He paused, staring at his own photograph, which confronted him. "And she said that it was his business"—he pointed at the likeness, thoughtfully—"to draw what might be—not

what is. That he could do it—only it wouldn't pay. To lead instead of follow. Hang it, Hastings"—he swung round and stared at the other—"almost she persuaded me to be a Christian."

"Almost? Quite, I should say—judging by your effort for *Dalton's*."

"Oh, that's a flash in the pan. I shall go back to the old style; unless——" He lit a cigarette with ostentatious deliberation.

"An engineer, you say," murmured Mr.

Hastings, tilting back his chair and gazing at the ceiling. " And to come back to business—your charming fantasy is at once an atonement and a present. You want a copy of the magazine sent her ? "

" Yes—direct from the publishers."

Mr. Hastings made a note on a slip of paper. " It shall be done. And you'd better fix up direct with the illustrator as to when you go down."

" It'll be awkward if she discovers us in the act," said Millward, dubiously.

" Very," agreed the other. " By the way—date of publication ? "

" As soon as possible."

" And what about America ? "

" Bother America ! Confound it, man, this is a wedding present ! You're singularly dense to-day."

The prince of literary agents bent over his desk to conceal his face.

" Quite," he murmured, soothingly, " quite. Would you like to use my telephone to tell them to take the chill off the claret for lunch ? "

" You vile materialist ! " laughed Millward. " Have you ever heard the proverb anent the fruit of the oyster and one of the baser denizens of the farmyard ? "

" He paused, staring at his own photograph, which confronted him. ' And she said that it was his business '—he pointed at the likeness—' to lead instead of follow.' "

III.

IT was two months later that Basil Millward, glancing through his morning mail, came across a letter which made him pause and stare at the postmark. It was unreadable, and he turned the envelope over two or three times in his hand. It was addressed to him care of *Dalton's Magazine*, and instinctively he felt it was from Ruth Bannister.

He got many letters similarly addressed, but over this one he felt sure before he opened it.

The number of the magazine containing his story had been out about a week: the copy had been duly sent from the office. And here was the answer.

With a faint smile playing round his lips he opened the letter and glanced at the signature. He was right: it was from the girl, and, propping it up against the coffee-pot, he began to read.

"So you were Basil Millward," it ran. "Stupid of me not to have recognized you—seeing that your photograph is not unknown in the illustrated papers. And I presume your story in *Dalton's* was meant for me. I don't quite know what induced you to write it, or whether you expect me to thank you for it. If you want the truth, I am not in the slightest degree grateful; in fact, I consider you were rather impertinent. When a child cares for a toy that it thinks is the biggest thing in the world, you give it that toy with an indulgent smile. And then, after a while, it finds out its mistake and the toy is discarded.

"But I'm not a child—and I dislike being handed toys with an indulgent smile. As I say, I think it is impertinent. You don't believe what you wrote; you had your tongue in your cheek the whole time. That's what makes me angry—not so much with you as with myself. Because I don't believe what you wrote myself—now.

"Yours faithfully,

"RUTH BANNISTER."

Twice did Basil Millward read it through from end to end; then he rose and went to the telephone.

"I don't believe what you wrote myself—now."

Poor kid! Disillusioned already. Truly that engineer must be an unworthy man.

He got through to the garage and told them to get his car ready. Then he rang up a theatrical manager and cancelled a luncheon engagement. After which interval the indubitable fact that cold kidneys are depressing articles of diet forced itself on his mind.

He glanced anxiously through the window at a somewhat watery sun, but decided that it might be better in the country. And half an hour later, with the letter in his pocket, he was threading his way through the traffic.

Discreet pumping of the landlord of the Three Cows revealed nothing save that Miss Ruth was not away from home; and after lunch Millward drove slowly off in the direction of the wood where he had met her. He was going to chance her coming again to the little glade; and if she didn't that afternoon, he'd come back the next, and the next, until she did. It was there that he must meet her; he couldn't go to the Hall.

HE struck the stream without difficulty, and followed it till he reached his goal.

It was just the same—not a twig seemed different. The brook still murmured past his feet; a little lower perhaps—but there hadn't been much rain. The blackbird was an absentee, but the hum of the insect world supplied the orchestra. And with his back against a tree Basil Millward sat and waited.

Once he pulled out her letter and read it again with a frown—a most unworthy fellow, that engineer! Gradually the frown disappeared; another train of thought appeared to have replaced his anger against the sinner. One that brought a smile to his lips; one that——

And then, with dramatic suddenness, came the girl. At one moment he had the glade to himself; the next he saw her standing on the opposite side, staring at him in silence. She made no movement as he stood up—only went on staring at him; and after a while he smiled.

"I have come to apologize," he said, with a bow.

"There's no excuse for trespassing this time, Mr. Millward," she said, gravely. "You know the way out, don't you?"

"Part of my creed is that I never run away from things I don't understand," said Millward. "Why don't you believe yourself—now?"

"Do you want material for another short story?" Her lips curled a little, and the man winced.

"That's not fair, Miss Bannister," he said, quietly. "You're not quite just."

She shrugged her shoulders. "Let us put it, then, that I'm not very interested," she remarked. "Are you going or am I?"

"Is my presence so very distasteful to you?" he asked, slowly.

"Distasteful! Good heavens, Mr. Millward, please don't become melodramatic. You've got no right to be here, as you know—so I should be obliged if you would go. I'm not in the mood for talking this afternoon."

He bowed. "Then that leaves me no alternative. But before I go there is one thing I want to make clear. When I wrote that short story I was not actuated by the feeling you attributed to me in your letter. There was nothing I felt less like than a grown-up handing a child a toy with an indulgent smile. It was a tribute—feeble, I admit, but one that I thought you would understand—to a far greater reality than my realism has ever painted."

"What do you mean?" she asked, wonderingly.

"During the half-hour we talked, Miss Bannister," he went on, gravely, "you made me understand the difference between God's

reality and man's; see the immeasurable gulf between the two. I have written the truth as I saw it—man's truth. Clamorous, perhaps, in its insistence on being portrayed; clamorous, perhaps, because it is ephemeral and passing; clamorous because, in the big scheme, it is a lie. And God's truth—which men call idealism—is pushed aside. It is magnificent, doubtless, but it is not life. It doesn't stand much chance to-day; it has to creep away into little secret places—where God is. And there, perhaps, for a space it may be given to a man to understand its infinite beauty. Sometimes the interpreter is his own soul; sometimes it is another person. My story, for what it was worth, was a tribute to my interpreter."

He raised his eyes and looked at her, and the tears were trembling on her lashes.

"An interpreter who got it all wrong," she said, shakily. "All wrong—from beginning to end."

"Ah! no—don't say that." He took a step towards her. "I'm relying on you."

She shook her head wearily. "He broke it off—the engagement—the day after we had our talk. By letter. Said it was impossible to afford it; would hamper him in his work. And he's gone to Peru for five years."

"Ah!" He looked away lest she should see the sudden flaming hope in his eyes. "And does it still hurt?"

"No," she answered, slowly. "I don't think it does. At least, not the fact that he's gone. It's the crumbling of one's ideals—however stupid they are—that takes the time to heal."

"But you mustn't let them crumble—just because one man has failed. Why not keep them standing for some other man, who—who may come along?" His face was still averted, and he heard her give a little laugh that was half a sob.

"Men don't want ideals. Oh! I don't blame them. Theirs is the responsibility of the home, of supporting their wife and children; theirs is the necessity of battling with man's truth, as you call it. God's truth doesn't supply you with bread and butter. It may have infinite beauty, as you say: once I thought it did. But it fails to fill one's stomach." She laughed again; then, very low, he heard her say: "It's a sham—a mockery."

AFTER a while he turned and faced her. And, being a man, with a man's foolishness, he imagined she saw nothing unusual in his face; while she, being a woman, with a woman's intuition, met his eyes for one half-second and then looked away.

"Men *do* want ideals," he said, gravely. "More than ever to-day. But because they realize all too early in life that what you said is the truth—that ideals don't give you bread and butter—they forget them. They fold them up and put them away; and then in years to come if they take them out—they find they don't fit, and throw them away. But they miss them—all their lives, either consciously or unconsciously. You made me take mine out. I—I—want help to make them fit."

She was engrossed in throwing sticks into the stream, and seemed unconscious of his closeness to her.

"I'm not going to ask you now if you will give me that help." His voice was very low. "I'm only going to say that you're the most wonderful thing I've ever met—and that—and that—I lo——that I can supply the bread and butter." He finished with a gasp.

Her shoulders began to shake gently.

"But can you always—always, I repeat—guarantee strawberry jam as well?"

"Invariably," he answered, stoutly.

"Then you must have a most wonderful grocer. Mr. Millward—Basil—my dear, don't. Not yet. Let me think."

"You very glorious girl!" he whispered, and his voice was shaking. "It isn't possible. I must be dreaming."

And now her eyes met his without faltering.

"Let's keep it God's truth, dear man," she said, gently. "Let's keep it God's truth as long as we can."

Basil Millward bent his head. "That's for all our lives, darling," he answered, gravely. "Till Journey's End."

From the branches above poured out a flood of song—the blackbird's overture to the world-old play that is ever new.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

NEW LIGHT ON NAPOLEON!

Discovery of his Wife's Honeymoon Diary!

The Romantic Story of the Private Journal of the Empress Marie Louise, which has just been brought to light and is to be published for the first time in our next number.

The CHRISTMAS CONJURER

By DAVID DEVANT

ILLUSTRATED BY HELEN McKIE.

IT is strange, but true, that many clever conjurers fight shy of children's parties. I used to like them, and yet I suppose I had my fair share of mishaps before, during, and after the parties.

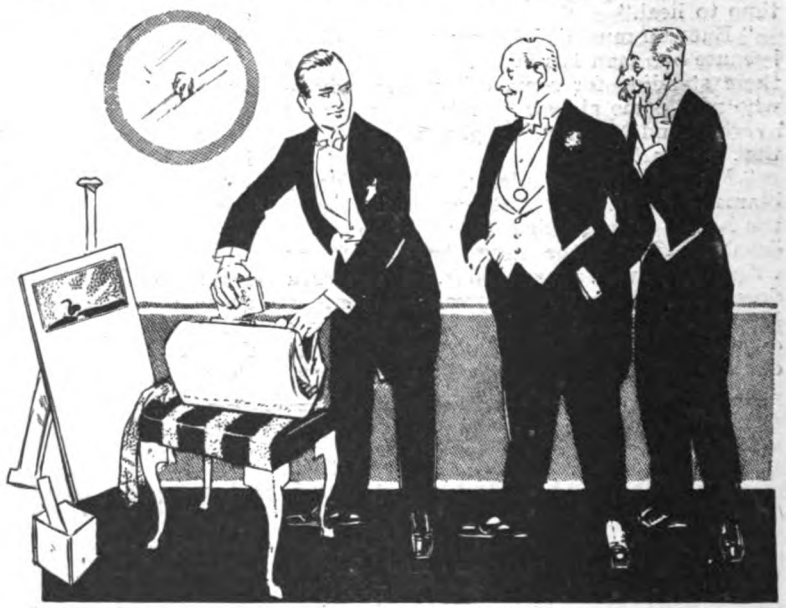
I remember once being bothered by a boy of twelve, my host's son, before a performance. He wanted to come behind my screen and see me unpack and get everything ready. His father got him away, but while I was out of the room for a moment the boy slipped back again. Suddenly the whole house was startled by a loud report. Everybody rushed to the drawing-room. I had to pretend to rush, but I knew what had happened.

That inquisitive boy had picked up the revolver I had placed in readiness for a trick and had pulled the trigger to see if it was loaded. The noise and a damaged Venetian blind showed that it *had* been loaded. The boy's mother said that it was disgracefully careless of me to leave loaded revolvers about, but luckily for me the boy's father came to my rescue and said that the boy was at fault in meddling with my things. But it wasn't the nicest way to begin a performance.

The boys who offered to help me pack up after a party used to bother me; some of them were very old "boys"—in fact, fathers of families. Their wish to know how some of the tricks were really done would make them forget to speak the truth.

"Look here, let me help you pack up," they would say. "You needn't mind me, because I've read all about these things in a book and I'm a bit of a conjurer myself."

Of course, I never accepted their kind offer, and when they found that there was nothing doing they would generally join the others at the party. I remember one young man who was very persistent; I couldn't get rid of him, so I laid a little trap for him. I told him that if he would kindly fold up a few flags and handkerchiefs for me I should be greatly obliged. I added that I was just going into the hall to put my rabbit back in its basket. I picked up the rabbit, went out, closed the door, and opened it again instantly. The young man had dropped



"The boys—some of them were very old 'boys'—in fact, fathers of families—who offered to help me pack up, used to bother me."

the flags and had started to overhaul my tricks. I waited for a moment; then the young man, caught in the act, suddenly remembered that he really ought to be going down to supper.

I've had scores and scores of troublesome boys to deal with at parties—boys who say that they know how everything is done. I remember one who kept this up for half an hour without any reproof from his elders. I had to do something in the way of self-protection, so I began my memory feat. The audience write down the names of thirty articles, read them to me once, and I remember them.

This precocious youth said that he could do that himself. I thanked him and said I should be very grateful if he would kindly do half the feat for me, as it would give me an opportunity of going behind my screen to prepare for the next trick. I retired behind the screen, and the boy took his place on the "stage." The only article he could remember was the one he had written down himself, and I am glad to say he got well laughed at for his fourteen failures. I then presented the feat in the usual way, and I had no more trouble with that boy.

One of the strangest children I've ever met was a little girl who came to me in a room in which I was waiting before a performance. She asked me my name, age, place of my birth, if I ever went for a holiday, if so, where to, and heaps of other questions. I answered them all and then ventured to ask what her name was. She drew herself up to her full height—which wasn't very much—suddenly assumed the dignified air of a dowager duchess, and exclaimed :—

"How *dare* you ask me my name!"

That ended the conversation.

The easiest performance I ever gave was before a party of three hundred poor children. The man who was giving the party told me that the performance was not to last a minute over the hour. (I knew that it wouldn't.) Just as I was going to begin he brought me three hundred threepenny-pieces and asked me to produce those in a trick and hand them out to the children. As I couldn't scramble the money I had to give away each coin separately, and that one little trick took up about twenty-five minutes.

MY shortest performance lasted five minutes, but I was engaged for an hour. My host would not let me begin at the right time; I reminded him that I had to get back to the Egyptian Hall, but he seemed to think that was bluff. Having been kept waiting for fifty-five minutes I gave a performance which lasted exactly five minutes and then went

"How dare you ask me my name?"

away. My host refused to pay the fee, but I am glad to be able to add that my agent sued him for it and got it.

Some Christmas conjurers do not understand children, and so they persist in doing clever sleight-of-hand tricks to them and disregard the fact that children do not like such tricks. Such conjurers are "conjuring mad." They are excellent for an audience composed entirely of conjurers or of people who are intensely interested in conjuring, but they are worse than useless for any other audience. They accept engagements for children's parties simply because they want the money, and the conjurer who performs for that reason alone is seldom successful.

Other conjurers dislike children's parties because they are frankly afraid of the children. They know—probably from bitter experience—that if a child, by a lucky guess, hits on the secret of a trick, that child will make the information known to others.

I have often been asked what a conjurer should do in such painful circumstances. Having been pulled off his pedestal by a mere child, how is he to get back again without loss of dignity?

Well, there is one thing he must not be tempted to do; he must not make the fatal mistake of trying to argue the matter with the child. To do that is to ask for trouble and, in most cases, to get it! Neither should the conjurer appear crestfallen or confused, and he will not be if he tells himself that he has not really given a trick away (let us hope he hasn't) and that the child merely happened to guess right. In most

cases the child has not really seen through the trick.

A little bluffing in such cases is sometimes advisable, but the wisest course is to take no notice of the interruption. The chances are that few people in the audience will hear all the child said, and that fewer still will believe that the child's guess has hit the mark.

Happily for conjurers, children's guesses about tricks—and if they do not guess audibly they are not enjoying the performance—are nearly always wrong. I know conjurers who make it a rule not to hide anything in their hands—"palm" is the technical name for it—when they are performing to children, because they are so afraid of being bowled out by the children. When I was a Christmas conjurer—many years ago—I invariably found that children would charge me with having something hidden in my hand when my hand was empty, but that when I really had something there the children were never suspicious. I cannot remember ever having been asked to show my hand at an inconvenient time.

If they were allowed to choose, the children would, I am sure, ask for "tricks which make you laugh"; they cannot do with a conjurer who takes conjuring too seriously—at any rate, when he is performing to them; he can be as serious as he likes when he is at home. And some conjurers are dreadfully in earnest when they are at home and are talking conjuring to other conjurers.

Some parents describe the conjurer—before his arrival—as "the funny man," which is rather hard on the conjurer. If he is not careful he may overhear a child demanding to know—after he has been working for all he is worth for twenty minutes—"when the funny man is going to be funny." Fortunately, it is not difficult to supply a child's demand for fun, but a little thought is necessary, and the average conjurer is usually so intent on thinking of his conjuring that he forgets to be an entertainer.

A REALLY first-rate man will not be content with doing tricks merely for the children; they will be his first consideration, of course, but he will take care, while entertaining them, to mystify the grown-ups as well. A man who can do this—and very few men can do it—scores in more ways than one.

In amusing and entertaining the children and mystifying the adults he also amuses the adults, and laughter is very infectious. After the children have laughed at the points in a trick which they can understand they will often start laughing at something in a trick which they cannot quite understand because they hear their elders laughing. Happy the conjurer who can achieve this miracle, and happy the hostess who secures his services, for, thanks to the Christmas conjurer, that party will be a big success.

I remember one charming hostess who came to me at the end of my performance, thanked me, and added:—

"And although they were children's tricks, I didn't see through any of them!"

I told her I was very glad, and then her husband chimed in:—

"Neither did I, and I was quite close to you all the time."

I gathered that they had both expected to have a few lessons in "how it is done," and were secretly a trifle disappointed.

Well, they ought to have been at some of my other parties, for I have had a few accidents.

I used to do a trick with a lamp chimney.

"A wild-looking Indian rushed into the dress circle, fired off his revolver twice, and exclaimed: 'Here I am!'"

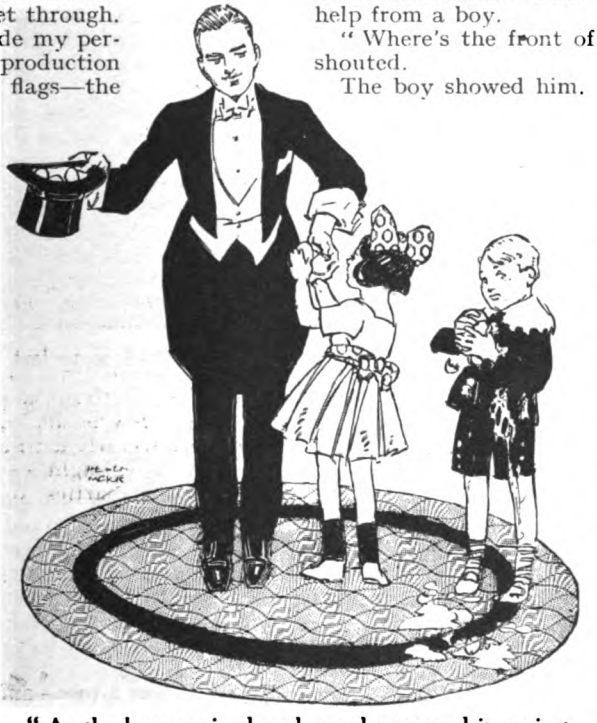
I closed one end with a piece of wet paper, filled the chimney with water, put a piece of wet paper on the top, and held it still for a moment. Then I took off the top paper and then the lower one, but the water remained in the chimney until I told it to flow out into a glass bowl on the table.

On one occasion the water got out of hand and poured out all over my shirt-front. I hurriedly explained that I always did that, just to show people that the water was real water. The water was very cold, and I had to pretend that I was accustomed to being wet through.

I used to conclude my performance with the production of two very large flags—the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes—on long posts. I once brought these out with a great flourish in rather a small drawing-room, and in doing so just missed a collision with a large glass chandelier hanging in the centre of the room. My host said to me afterwards :—

"What a splendid eye for distance you must have! Do you know, when you brought out those flags I quite thought you had caught the chandelier."

I didn't tell him so, but I, too, quite thought I had caught the chandelier, until the trick was over and I found I had missed it by an inch.



"As the boy received each egg he pressed it against his velvet jacket; by the time I had finished he was smothered with eggs."

IN thinking of conjurers' mistakes I recall one made by an Indian conjurer who was performing at a music-hall in the provinces. The big trick of the performance was an escape from a cabinet on the stage. The performer got into the cabinet and a curtain was drawn across it. In an instant the performer appeared in the auditorium and the assistant in the cabinet.

That is how the illusion should have been presented, but on the occasion I refer to the music-hall was being painted and a door leading from the stage to the auditorium had been locked. The room below the stage was also being whitewashed. When the Indian secretly made his way out of the cabinet he ran up against a good deal of whitewash, but could not run out of the door which led to the auditorium, so he popped out of the stage door, intending to run round to the front of the house. By this time, thanks to the whitewash, he was a very piebald Indian. When he got outside the hall he could not find his way round to the front, and, knowing that seconds were valuable in an illusion of this kind, he sought help from a boy.

"Where's the front of the theatre?" he shouted.

The boy showed him. He got just what he asked for—the theatre, which happened to be close to the music-hall; only a narrow passage separates the two buildings. Therefore, the audience in the theatre were disturbed in the middle of an intense love-scene by a wild-looking, piebald Indian, who rushed into the dress circle, fired off his revolver twice, and exclaimed :—

"Here I am!"

I once came across a little boy who seemed to have no sense of touch. He came up to help me in a trick in which I produce a number of eggs from a hat. I give the eggs to a little girl, with instructions to pass them on to the boy. The fun begins when the boy gets overloaded with eggs and starts to drop them.

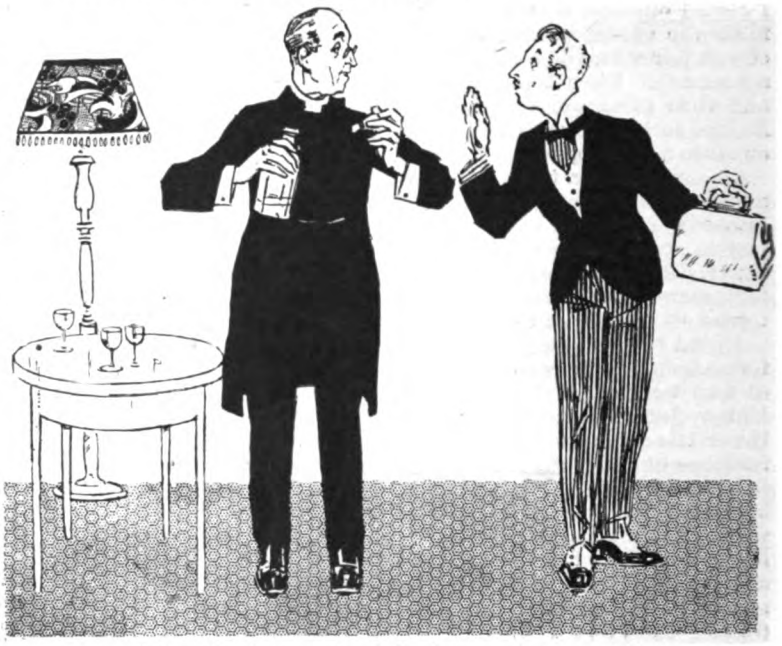
This little boy did not wait for that moment. As he received each egg he clutched it eagerly and pressed it against his nice little velvet jacket; by the time I had finished he was smothered with eggs, and I don't think I have ever heard louder laughter from an audience. That trick cost me a new velvet suit for the boy.

A very short experience with audiences of the rustic labourer type taught me what tricks to avoid doing to them. I remember when I was a beginner having some good card tricks spoiled by such audiences. I

would get to the end of the trick and ask the rustic who had taken a card: "Is that your card, sir?" And the answer would be: "Blest if I know—I've clean forgot!" My assurance that the card was the card which he had taken out of the pack in the first instance was never accepted.

I used to have a very raw assistant who was a perpetual joy to me. He was splendid at carrying things and looking after the luggage and preparing matters behind the scenes, but he was not exactly a diplomatist. I remember once going to a country rectory with him. After the performance the kindly rector suggested that we should like a little refreshment, and asked my assistant if he would have a glass of sherry.

"No, thank you, sir," said my assistant, with much feeling; "I had some last year!"



"No, thank you, sir; I had some last year!"

I once found myself in a very awkward fix after a performance at a big house near Epping Forest. I was down to give a performance in the afternoon to the children and another in the evening to the grown-ups. I had a pianist with me. After the first performance my host took us round the garden and showed us, among other things, a very large and ferocious dog, which was chained up. He warned us not to go near the dog. He explained that the dog was necessary because, being so near the East-end of London, they sometimes had strange visitors in that district, and so every evening the dog was let loose and was allowed to roam about the grounds, which were enclosed by a high wall.

My second performance was rather late. Afterwards, the pianist and I hurried off to catch the last train and—missed it. There was nothing for it but to return to the house, and when we got to the gate we remembered the dog. The pianist suggested that we should toss to see who went first.

"And," he stipulated, "none of your tricks, please."

I tossed honestly and—lost. I think that the walk from the gate to the house was the bravest thing I ever did. It was pitch dark; I was carrying a heavy bag, and I expected every second to be stopped by a savage bull-mastiff.

Luckily, when we got to the house, we found that our host and his guests had not gone to bed. They were pleased to laugh at our adventure, and then told us that as they had half expected to see us again they had taken the precaution of chaining up the dog. We returned to London by road.

I ONCE lost a toss—and yet won it. I was going down to a Sunday-school in the country. An entertainer at the piano and I had to provide a two-hours' entertainment between us, and having looked up the trains we knew that the one who went on for the second part would have to stay the night somewhere. So we tossed to see who should go on first, and I lost. When we got to the village hall the vicar came up and asked if the conjurer would kindly give the first half of the entertainment!

I used to find that all children were alike in their taste for conjuring tricks. I have conjured to the offspring of the best people in the land, and I have conjured to the children of the gutter; the same tricks pleased all kinds of juvenile audiences.

I used to be very interested in watching the expressions of the children's faces and in studying their gestures and the movements of their little heads. Most children are beautifully unselfish; when they get a huge

joke put down in front of them they feel they must share it with other children and their parents and their jolly bachelor uncles. Bachelor uncles form the perfect background of many a Christmas party audience. I could tell almost to a second when the children's expressions would change, how they would change, and what the whispered comments on the performance would be.

I have tried to show that the ideal Christmas conjurer is not merely a man who can do a few tricks; the man who has mastered a few tricks has gone only about half-way to his goal. Even that distance is too much for some men. How do they toil along the road to success?

By conjuring. An amateur cannot hope to be successful until he has appeared many times before audiences; private rehearsals are very necessary, of course, but performances with people looking on are indispensable. Consequently, the earnest amateur loses no opportunity of gaining experience. He will not care what sort of audience it is, or where it is, or what it costs him to get there, so long as he can appear. I have often thought that life in workhouses and lunatic asylums must be really rather amusing in the winter, for it is in such places that conjurers learn their job and, having learned it, become professionals. Sunday-schools are also useful, but Sunday-school

"The children helped themselves. I had great difficulty in rescuing my tricks."

audiences are very critical; they see many conjurers.

I knew a professional conjurer who was once considerably surprised to find that his performance at a Sunday-school seemed to be going very flat. The superintendent of the school explained matters afterwards. The children had previously had an amateur conjurer whose performance had evidently been so very bad that those children had had the time of their lives. They had bowled out nearly all the tricks, made the amateur nervous, and enjoyed the whole thing immensely and in the wrong way. It took one or two good performers to show them how to enjoy a conjuring performance properly.

I was only once late for a performance at the old Egyptian Hall, but I was not to blame. I had been giving a performance at a children's party, finishing with a distribution trick. The children got the idea into their heads that everything I had with me was to be distributed—tricks, flags, handkerchiefs, ribbons, the rabbits, everything. They helped themselves. I had great difficulty in rescuing my tricks, which I needed for my performance at the Egyptian Hall. The next day I had another set of tricks made, and always after that I kept one set at the Hall and another set for parties.

SOME hostesses seem to think that there is no limit to the conjurer's abilities. They will coolly bear down on the conjurer just before he is ready to begin and ask him to work one or two "little presents" into one of his tricks. Among the trifles which I have been expected to "palm" in this way have been a rocking-horse, a large dolls' house, and a mountain of crackers, all loose. You cannot make a really good trick out of such things on the spur of the moment.

It will be seen that the work of the Christmas conjurer is not quite so simple and easy as it may appear to be; it does not consist merely in learning a few tricks and then doing them over and over again. Sometimes I think that the most successful conjurers are the men who have given as much thought and labour to the study of human nature as they have to the study of magic.

But let it not be thought that I am pessimistic. I am not. The Christmas conjurer usually has a very good time in the Christmas holidays. I always enjoyed the Christmas parties, although my presence was professional. And if, at times, I found myself engaged by a hostess who was not quite as Christmassy as I should have liked, I was always able to console myself afterwards with the thought that at any rate I had helped to make a few children happy.

A NEW COMEDY of ERRORS

Read This Story and Win a Prize!

by BARRY PAIN

ILLUSTRATED BY TREYER EVANS

The following story contains a number of mistakes—mistakes of facts, contradictions of one passage by another, and so forth—made purposely by the Author for the ingenuity of the reader to detect. For example, in line 25 of the first column on the next page the Author says "Boyd shipped his sculls," the word "sculls" being a mistake, as a few lines earlier it was stated that the couple were in a punt.

Read the story carefully and see how many errors you can detect. Then make out a list of them—indicating each by the line, column, and page on which it occurs—and address it to "Mistakes," THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, to reach us on or before 25th January, 1921. To those who discover the greatest number of mistakes the following prizes are offered:—

FIRST PRIZE—£25

And Six other Prizes consisting of Newnes' Handsome Library Edition of H. G. Wells' "Outline of History," in Two Volumes (Published at 48/6). This edition is superbly printed and contains nearly 600 illustrations, including 47 plates printed in Colours, and all the Original Horrabin Maps and Diagrams.

The Editor's decision in all questions relating to this competition is final.

THE more strenuous of the riverside house-party were busy on the tennis-courts, and some of the less strenuous were watching the game. Mr. Reginald Boyd, a tall, clean-shaven young gentleman, who could be extremely strenuous and also extremely lazy, was supposed to be watching the game. But his looks strayed frequently towards the house.

Presently out from the house came Evadne Marsh. She was pretty, and somewhat capricious, and this morning she was in a wickedly bad temper. She looked towards the tennis-courts, turned away, and took a path that led down to the river.

Observing this, Boyd arose and took a path that intersected the path that led down to the river. As a result he was enabled to ask Evadne what she intended to do that morning.

"Nothing," said Evadne, sulkily. "Yes, you can take me on the river. You'll have to do all the work."

"Delighted," said Boyd. "You shall have nothing to do but talk."

"I'm not going to talk. I'm going to read."

"Right. Let me fetch your book for you."

"You can't. I've forgotten the name of

it. I'll get it myself and join you at the boat-house."

Her expression was still distinctly sullen as she stretched herself on the cushions of the punt and without a word to Boyd began to read "Saracinesca."

"Which way shall we go?" asked Boyd.

"Don't care. And please don't keep on interrupting me."

For some ten minutes they went on in silence. Suddenly Evadne looked up from her book and said, angrily:—

"Must you keep us in the sun all the time? Do get into the bank in the shade somewhere. It's much too hot, anyhow."

Boyd was not really responsible for the fact that the earth is at its nearest point to the sun in early July, and that the temperature rises accordingly, but he was quite prepared to be blamed for that or anything else, and to take it smiling.

"Certainly," said Boyd, cheerfully. "Great idea." And a few moments later the boat glided gently into the shade of the willows and Boyd shipped his sculls.

Evadne read—or appeared to read—for two minutes longer. Then she sat up, and deliberately hurled the book as far as she could from her into the water.

Boyd laughed. "Shall I go in and fetch it?"

"No, you idiot. And why don't you talk, instead of being so obedient and meek and good-tempered? You've brought us into a perfect nest of flies, too. Give me a cigarette."

He gave her a cigarette and lighted it for her. "Really," he said, "you ought not to hurl the works of Henry James into the river. It's irreverent. What did you do it for?"

"It's your fault. You wouldn't quarrel with me."

"With you? Never."

"Well, then, I had to do something, hadn't I? It's rather a pity, because it was Clare's book really, and she may have wanted to read it."

"That's all right. I'll get another copy. Clare will never know anything about it. And now tell me what's the matter this morning."

There was a pause and then an outburst.

"Never again will I stay at the house of a relative—never! I'd have made an excuse to leave to-day, if I hadn't been going to-morrow in any case. Relatives always presume. They think they can say absolutely anything they like to you, and tell you it's for your good, and that you've got to put up with it."

"But your cousin, Mrs. Anstruther, is very fond of you. She told me so."

"Amy fond of me? I thought so once. But you should have heard her in my room last night. She implied that I was a cat and had no conscience. She said I behaved badly to men."

"You do—to some men—sometimes."

FOR the first time Evadne smiled. "You mean just now? Yes, I was rather a beast. Sorry. Still, that's nothing, is it? What Amy meant was much worse. She implied that I lured men on to satisfy my vanity and then threw them over. Yes, I'm angry with Amy, but I'm much more angry with Mr. Mollinson. I'll never know why he proposed to me. Unless he's absolutely insane, he can't have supposed it would be any good. And then he goes bleating about my cruelty to Amy and sets her on to me. A lot of good it will do him!"

"You're sure he spoke to Mrs. Anstruther about you?"

"Must have. She didn't mention his name—probably the coward asked her not to—but I guessed what had happened easily enough. Otherwise, why should she have lectured me? I'm twenty years old and I won't be lectured. Amy's married and I'm not, but she's not so much older than I am. I call it cheek. Oh, how I hate everybody!"

"Curious," said Boyd. "It was last night that Mrs. Anstruther was speaking to me about you."

"I suppose she told you I was vain, cruel, and selfish, and tried to set you against me?"

"On the contrary, she sang your praises. She said that she loved to have you staying with her, and that she thought you such an excellent companion for Clare."

"Really true?"

"Word of honour."

"You think I ought not to quarrel with Amy?"

"Well, quarrels between relatives are generally pretty silly. Besides, what would you do about the rest of the family? I thought Anstruther was rather a favourite of yours."

"Bob? He's a perfect old dear, of course. And I love Clare. I believe I love Amy, too, when she's nice. But I'm not going to forgive Mr. Mollinson, though."

"Oh, Willie Mollinson must look after himself—not that it's a thing he's particularly good at. He's the most nervous man I ever met. Still, I've known him for years, and he's not a bad sort. Rather learned, and collects all manner of wonderful things."

"He's not going to collect me."

"I never thought he would, or that you ever gave him the slightest reason for thinking he would. I'll tell Mrs. Anstruther so if I get the chance."

"I wish you would. And I'll be quite

"Evadne was pretty, and somewhat capricious, and this morning she was in a wickedly bad temper."

sweet to Amy—I will, really. You've got me out of my black mood and made me happy again. You're too good to me. Thanks."

Impulsively she held out both her hands to him, and he held them for a minute in his own.

Soon afterwards they returned to the house. Evadne was in the best spirits now, and charming with everybody. Mrs. Anstruther took Boyd apart.

"So much obliged to you for getting Evadne out of her tantrums. She really is too childish. Last night I gave her a friendly hint. I didn't think she was behaving fairly to a certain man, unless she was seriously fond of him. So this morning she treated me with frigid politeness. Rather absurd, what? However, we're quite good friends again."

"By the certain man I suppose you mean Mollinson?"

"Goodness, no! Why should I? They were quite friendly, but that was all. Mollinson never cared seriously about her nor she about him."

"So I should have said. Now prepare for shocks. On the day he left Mollinson proposed to her and was refused. She thought that he had complained to you about her, and that was the reason why you lectured her. She told me this herself."

"I don't understand it. I thought—and so did others—that he had different views."

"I felt sure of it, and I would have been willing to make a considerable bet that I knew what his views were. In fact, he practically told me what they were."

"Then how do you explain it?"

"Willie Mollinson is a good chap, and he is full to the neck of useless knowledge. But Willie does not know how to live and ought not to be allowed out without a nursemaid and a solicitor, one on each side. So after lunch I propose to run up to London in my little car and see Willie—I'll be back in time for dinner, and I'll bring the explanation with me."

And after lunch he carried out this plan precisely as arranged, and Evadne, though remaining in an angelic temper, found the afternoon rather dull.

WILLIE MOLLINSON was a good-looking young man whose appearance rather suggested stained glass. He had considerable private means, and perhaps this was as well, as he also had the collecting habit. He collected many things and had a special weakness for the autographs of the great. That morning at the sale of a famous Oriental library he had secured a scrap of very old and discoloured parchment on which was written a verse of the Koran—written by the hand of Mohammed himself. He regarded it as a great prize. Well, it was the thirty-first day of the month, and the thirty-first had always been a lucky day with him. It was on the thirty-first of May that he had discovered a Strad of the finest period—early in the eighteenth century. And on the thirty-first of the following month one of his dearest treasures—a manuscript of Keats—had come to him.

But there are those who remember their disadvantages and forget their advantages. Possibly the mule owes its traditional bad temper to brooding over the fact that its mother was an ass, disregarding the brighter side of its pedigree. Certainly Willie, as he paced his study that afternoon, was meditating solely on his bad luck. It was not a pleasing occupation, and the arrival of Boyd was a welcome interruption.

"But what," asked Willie, "brings you up from Maidenhead to this sweltering hole?"

"The G.W.R. brought me, but you are responsible."

"I? Why, what have I done?"

"Goodness knows! That's what I have come to find out. Now don't wander up and down like a caged beast. Sit down and let me put you through it. You told me you wanted to marry Mrs. Anstruther's daughter Clare."

"I did and I do. So probably does every man who has met her."

"Well, I know one who doesn't—though she's a nice little girl, very. Go ahead."

"I happen to know—to know for a fact—on good authority—that she won't have me and would never have me. That's why I cleared out. If I can't marry her I still don't want to persecute her."

"I want to know who the authority was. In fact, I want the whole story. It's not idle curiosity—I think you have made a mistake."

"Well, I'll tell you. You can't expect a nine-carat diamond to have the quality of an eighteen-carat. I'm not like you. You've got a dominating eye, and a fierce black moustache, and a commanding manner. I, on the other hand, am a very nervous man. You would have gone straight to Clare and blurted out the whole thing."

"Direct methods are best."

"Well, Clare's a mere child. I didn't want to scare her. I thought it better to get her accustomed to the idea gradually. Now, Evadne Marsh is Clare's best friend. They tell one another everything."

"No girl ever tells anybody everything."

"Perhaps not everything, but I was quite certain that Evadne would know what Clare's feelings were about me, and also what my feelings were about Clare."

"Why?"

"Well, it was obvious that Clare was what I was there for. Everybody must have known it. So one evening I told Evadne I wanted to consult her, and we walked out into the garden together. It was a lovely evening. There was a young moon with one little silvery star in the hollow of the crescent. The river stretched——"

"Cut out the landscape. What, exactly, did you say to her?"

"I said: 'You must know that I am very much in love. Do tell me if I have any chance.'"

"Good heavens! And she?"

"Oh, she didn't say much, but it was quite decisive. She said it was a pity I'd said that, and that I had not the ghost of a chance and never would have. And then she just turned round and swept out of the room."

"Go on."

"Well, the next morning I left. What else could I do?"

"Willie, my son, did it never occur to your poor bemused mind that Miss Evadne Marsh thought that you were trying to propose to her?"

"She couldn't."

"She couldn't do anything else. She may have thought that you had gone mad, and probably she did, but she must have thought that you were trying to make love to her. Why, you took everything for granted and never even mentioned Clare's name."

"This," said Willie, gloomily, "is too absolutely awful. I can never look Miss Marsh in the face again. I can never look anybody in the face again—except Clare, who understands everything without being told."

"Think so? Well, there's one thing that girls have the habit of refusing to understand until they're told, and that's the thing you've got to tell Clare to-night. Yes, you'll look Miss Marsh and lots of other people in the face in the course of the evening. I'll just ring up Amy Anstruther and say I am bringing you back with me."

It was in vain that Willie protested. Boyd had his way. Shortly afterwards Willie and a suit-case with provision for the night were deposited in Boyd's car, and soon after six they were at Mrs. Anstruther's house in Maidenhead.

AT dinner that night the conversation was slightly astronomical, and as a result Clare and Willie went out to see if they could find Sirius. They took over an hour in the search, and on their return did not claim that it had succeeded, but none the less seemed quite pleased with themselves. Meanwhile, at a meeting of Amy, Evadne, and Boyd the strictest secrecy as to Willie's little mistake was agreed upon. And Evadne, pressed by Amy, found that after all she could remain for another week.

And next morning, after his engagement was announced, Willie found that he also could extend his visit. But he carried Clare off with him to London for the day. He had to supplement the resources of the modest kit-bag he had brought with him. He had to buy a ring. He had also to satisfy his desire to give expensive presents to everybody. They returned heavily laden.

The spirit of the collector showed in these offerings. The watch for Evadne was an exquisite little example of French artistry, while the set of old wine-glasses which he brought for Mrs. Anstruther had the bluish tint that proclaimed their Waterford origin.

Whereon Bob commented privily to Boyd: "They're very nice, and, of course, Amy's mad about the old glass. But between you and me I'm rather glad they're so priceless that they can't be used. I like a pure white glass for my '88 port."

After this Willie practically withdrew from society. It might be said of him, as Mark Twain said of the "Heathen Chinee," that "subsequent proceedings interested him no more." His great idea seemed to be to disappear and take Clare with him.

And, love being notoriously infectious, it is not surprising that one night Evadne in a pale blue dressing-gown slipped into her aunt's room with great news to impart.

"Amy," she said, "when you lectured me about flirtatiousness the other day, and I got the sulks, you couldn't have been thinking about Willie, as I supposed then. Had you any special man in your mind?"

"Of course—Archie Boyd. I thought he was seriously fond of you, and that it was not fair for you to show him the preference you did if you meant nothing by it."

"Well," said Evadne, with a very poor imitation of petulance, "I mean to go on showing him preference just the same. What's more, I won't be Clare's bridesmaid. And——"

But here Amy, who was an observant lady and by no means deceived, interrupted her with a kiss.

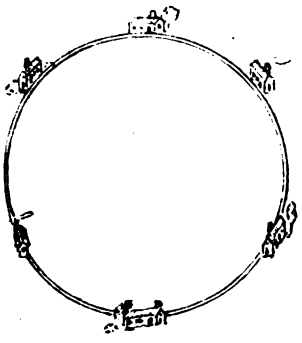
"I'm so glad, Evadne," she said. "He's just the man for you. And I'm glad it's to be a double wedding, even if it does make you a bride instead of a bridesmaid. And now tell me all about it."

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

530.—THE SIX COTTAGERS.

A CIRCULAR road, twenty-one miles long, surrounds a tract of wild and desolate country, and on this road are six cottages so placed that one cottage or another is at a distance of one, two, three up to twenty miles inclusive from some other cottage. Thus, Brown may be a mile from Stiggins, Jones two miles from Rogers, Wilson three miles from Jones, and so on. Of course, they can walk in either direction as required. Can you place the cottages at distances that will fulfil these conditions? The illustration is intended to give no clue as to the relative distances.



So much interest appears to have been taken in No. 518, "The Damaged Measure," that I have given this extension of it. That puzzle may be solved in, at fewest, sixteen different ways. I have sought a rule for determining the fewest possible marks for any number of inches, and for at once writing out a solution, but a general law governing all the multiplicity of answers has still to be found.

531.—A LITTLE SHOPPING.

A LADY went into a shop to make a purchase.

"I'll have three of the round ones and four of the square, please," she said, placing a single coin on the counter in exact payment. Then she changed her mind, as any lady is entitled to do.

"On second thoughts I will take four of the round ones and three of the squares."

"Then that will be a penny more, madam," said the shopkeeper.

I do not know what she was buying, but she spent less than a guinea. What was the coin she laid on the counter at first?

532.—WORD-BUILDING.

A CANADIAN lady, Mrs. A. R., sends me the following. The first missing word contains two letters, and in each successive word a new letter has been added. Of course, the letters throughout are not necessarily kept in the same order:—

Oft-times reports * * distant foreign lands
* * * in the telling grossly magnified.
Though loud the traveller may * * * * that he
His doom could scarce * * * * * on land or tide.

He tells how he did * * * * * * upon some isle,
No * * * * * * * there to wait and do his will.
Of thrilling tales by * * * * * * * * of the deep
E'en pious * * * * * * * * * do take their fill.

The cinema * * * * * * * * * * wild displays,
* * * * * * * * * * * bold and deeds of devilry.
The poorest * * * * * * * * * * * * may be thrilled
If he but in the * * * * * * * * * * * * to see.

533.—BOTTLE AND CORK.

IT is surprising how the simplest puzzle will sometimes trip people up. If you put this little question with a smile to a company, as something ridiculously easy, nearly everybody will give the wrong answer—not the youngsters only. A bottle and cork cost twopence halfpenny, and the bottle cost twopence more than the cork. What did the cork cost?

534.—AN ENIGMA.

A LARGE number of correspondents inform me that the accepted answer, for at least fifty years, to No. 524, concerning Noah's Ark and the "sound of boots upon the stairs," is:—

To him who cons the matter o'er,
A little thought reveals
He heard it first who went before
A pair of soles and eels.

So my own guess, which I considered unsatisfactory, must, I suppose, be accepted as correct. There are many slightly different readings of both the puzzle and the answer.

Here is another enigma of the same period, with an answer that everybody will accept:—

A Bible character without a name,
Whose body never to corruption came.
Who died a death that none had died before,
Whose shroud is found in every household store.

SOLUTIONS TO "CHRISTMAS PUZZLES AT A CLUB."

THE FIRST LOSING-CHESS PROBLEM.

IF 1. P becomes a Q, 1. K—Q 6; 2. Q takes Kt P, 2. K—Q 7; 3. Q takes P, 3. P—B 5; 4. Q takes P, 4. K—Q 6; 5. Q takes K and Black has won. Or 2. Q takes B P, 2. K—Q 5; 3. Q takes K, 3. P—Kt 3, etc., and Black wins. If 1. P becomes B, the same as first variation above. If 1. P becomes Kt, 1. P—Kt 3; 2. Kt takes P, 2. P—B 5; 3. Kt takes P, 3. P—R 4; 4. Kt takes P, 4. K—K 6; 5. Kt—Kt 7, 5. K—K 5; 6. Kt—R 5 or Q 8, 6. K—K 4 or Q 5 accordingly, and Black gives up his K next move and wins. If 1. P becomes K, 1. K—Q 6; 2. K takes P, 2. K—B 5; 3. K takes P, 3. K—Kt 4; 4. K takes K, 4. P—B 5; 5. K takes P, and Black wins. White can only win by 1. P becomes R, 1. K—Q 6; 2. R takes P, 2. P—R 4; 3. R takes P, 3. P—Kt 4; 4. R takes P, 4. K—Q 7; 5. R—Kt 4, 5. K—K 7; 6. R—Q B 4, 6. K—K 8; 7. R—B 3, and White can force the Black K into the corner and then sacrifice his R and win.

Solutions to "Christmas Puzzles at a Club"

SETTING THE CHESSMEN.

TURN the diagram upside down and then count all the squares from White's side of the board—nearest to you. (K R 8—K Kt sq.), (K sq.—Q B 8), (Q R sq.—K B sq.—Q Kt 8), (Q Kt sq.—Q B sq.—Q R 8—K B 8), (Q sq.—K R sq.—K 8). This means, taking the last bracket as an example, that we exchange the piece on White's Q square with that on K R square, and then exchange the new piece on K R square with that on K 8 square. The pawns may be exchanged in four moves. Thus, with the nine above, 13 moves in all are sufficient. But if you set up the board the other way round you will require 15 moves! That was another point they overlooked.

ODDS AND EVENS.

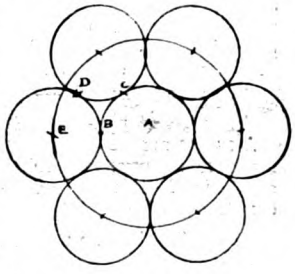
THE smallest odd number is ELEVEN. If you take from it an even number (of letters), two, then EVEN remains.

RIDING IN THE WIND.

HE could ride 1 mile in $3\frac{3}{4}$ minutes, or $\frac{7}{24}$ mile per minute. The wind would help or retard him to the extent of $\frac{1}{24}$ mile per minute. Therefore with the wind he could ride $\frac{8}{24}$ mile per minute, and against the wind $\frac{6}{24}$ mile per minute; that is, 1 mile in 3 minutes or 4 minutes respectively, as stated.

THE SEVEN CIRCLES.

TAKING the inner circle as the given circle, from any point on it mark off C, equal to A B (an equilateral triangle), from B and C similarly find D, and from B and D find the point E. Now describe the larger circle through E, and with the radius A E mark off round it from E the remaining five points. You can then draw your six circles from these points on the larger circle.



WEIGHING THE BABY.

IT is important to notice that the man, baby, and dog weigh together 180lb., as recorded on the dial in the illustration. Now, the difference between 180 and 162 is 18, which equals twice the weight of the dog, whose weight is 9lb. Therefore the baby weighs 30lb., since 30 less 70 per cent. is 9.

AN ALPHABETICAL PUZZLE.

THE word is BRIGHTFACED.

A TYPEWRITER CRYPTOGRAM.

THE one-letter words, P and g, must be taken from a, I, and o, and p cannot be A because the second word begins with a vowel, while it is unlikely to be O. If we make P equals I, and g equals a, then we can assume the sentence begins "I am," in which case kz will be "me" or "my"—probably "my," because then ngz would end in "ay." Call this last "say," since then pn will be "is." Now, either e or t in et must be o or u, but as we know that the second letter in ezhpne is y, the e is most probably a consonant. Make t stand for o; then we immediately get et equals "to." We now have the following, where the dots stand for letters not yet found: "I am so..y to say my ty.ist is a .....t .oo." Here "sorry" and "typist" are seen at a glance, and then we have the p and r for "perfect," which gives us the f for "foot."

THE SIX COINS

AT the start of play Andrews held a half-sovereign and a shilling, Baker held a crown and a florin, and Carey held a double florin and a half-crown. After settlement, Andrews held double florin and florin, Baker the half-sovereign and half-crown, and Carey held crown and shilling. Thus, Andrews lost 5s., Carey lost 6d., and Baker won 5s. 6d. The selection of the coins is obvious, but their allotment requires a little judgment and trial.

A SQUARE WITH FOUR PENNIES.

THE illustration indicates how we may show a rectilinear square with four pennies. The sides of the square are the lines beneath Britannia

ALPHABETICAL ARITHMETIC.

THE multiplier must be 3, 6, or 9, to produce all the nine digits in product. If 3, the last figures must be 510; if 6, they must be 210, 410, or 810; and 9 is found impossible as a multiplier. We cannot have $194 \times 6 = 164$, because the other N at the beginning cannot be 9 with the multiplier 6. Also 28×6 and 78×6 are impossible because you cannot get the repeating H in third place. We therefore know that N and S stand for 1 and 0 respectively. This is where the "low cunning" comes in. The letters are not the first ten in the alphabet, so one could pretty safely guess that they were selected to form a word, like the tradesman's private-mark key, each letter in order having the numerical value of its position. If so, it is N.....S. We are soon able to find the key-word

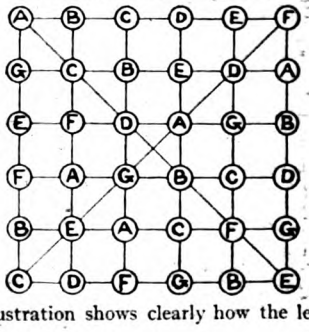
N I G H T M A R E S
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

and then we get the answer at once:—

3 2 8 . 9 7 5 4 1 0
6

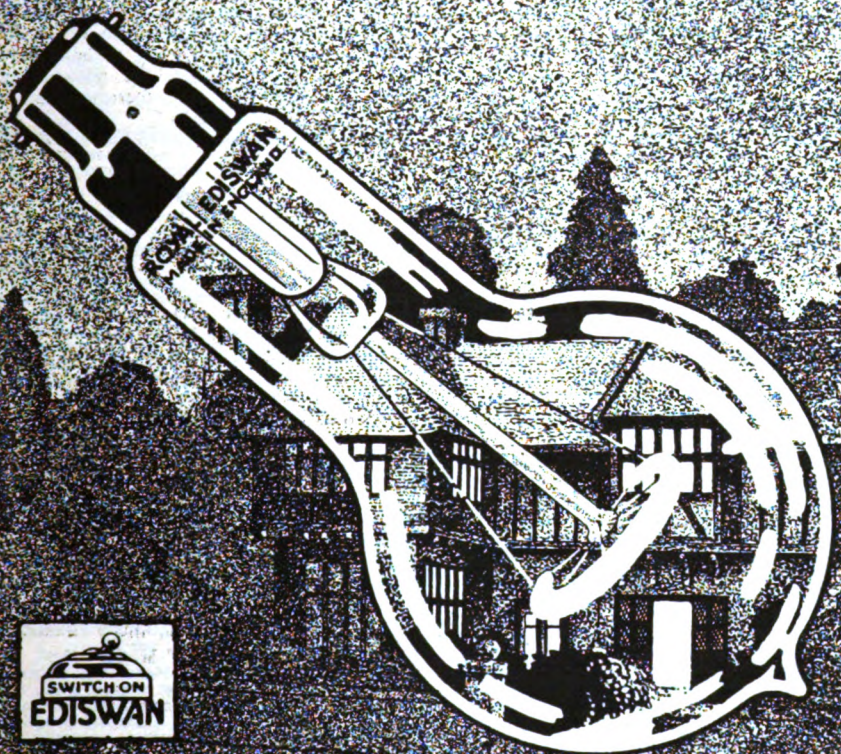
1 9 7 3 8 5 2 4 6 0

THE LETTERED SQUARE.



THE illustration shows clearly how the letters may be placed.

ROYAL
EDISWAN
GASFILLED ELECTRIC LAMPS



SWITCH ON
EDISWAN

The Welcome Light

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ROYAL EDISWAN GASFILLED LAMPS

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To face end of Text.

Miss Gladys Cooper Explains Some Beauty Secrets.

The Popular London Star Favours Simple Methods.

I have been asked to give a few simple recipes that I know, either through personal use or by observation, to be valuable to the toilet, and which are within the reach of the average woman. In these days of £100 facial treatments and elaborate and expensive beautifying processes my suggestions may read like lessons in economy, but they are not especially so intended. They are merely practical suggestions, in which the keynote is "effectiveness." All the materials or ingredients which I mention are either already at hand in the home, or may be readily procured from the chemist. Fortunately I do not suffer from the ailments or troubles enumerated below, but some people who are not so fortunate have told me their experiences, and with your permission I will set forth some remedies which they have found to be efficacious.

Home Made Hair Tonic.

My acquaintances say that a good stimulant to the natural growth of the hair is a very simple, effective, and safe stimulating lotion made up by mixing one ounce of boranium with ½ pint of bay rum. This may be applied to the hair roots occasionally with the finger tips with good results.

Complexion Renewals.

Complexion experts advise me that a normal, healthy complexion is constantly renewing itself by dropping off in tiny flakes of worn-out tissue, thus revealing the fresh young skin underneath. They say that when this process is checked by age, exposure, or some of many causes, the complexion becomes dull and ugly. The rational treatment recommended is to help the skin perform its natural functions of "shedding" worn-out tissue. For this purpose, I am informed, there is nothing so good as pure mercolized wax, used for a few nights, just as you would use a face cream. It is claimed that it possesses a special affinity for the effete scarf-skin, which it quickly removes by absorbing it. The face, I am assured, will soon look much younger and prettier under this treatment.

Removing Superfluous Hair.

I have been told of some most remarkable experiments in removing superfluous hair, roots and all, with what is said to be a perfectly harmless substance known as phelactine. It is claimed for this preparation that it is not a depilatory, and therefore does not burn or injure the skin. With a candle flame it is first melted to a syrup-like consistency, and while still warm is smeared on the skin over the superfluous hair. Although it is removed almost immediately the effect is supposed to paralyse and loosen the hair roots, for when it is removed the hair should come right off with it and the roots themselves. I am told that in many cases the growth never reappears, and that even if it does so it returns only after a very long time and in so much weaker form that it is easy to cope with by means of a repeated application of phelactine. I understand that the method is becoming so well known that many chemists are now supplying phelactine in specially prepared packages containing full instructions for home use.

MISS GLADYS COOPER.

Photo] [Wrather & Buys.

Is Powder Necessary?

A great many women object to using powder, for various reasons. The following formula is a good one: Dissolve an ounce of cleminite in four tablespoonfuls of water, or witch-hazel, and use it as a face lotion, smoothing the skin with the fingers until it is dry. This method is perfectly harmless. I am told that a really beautiful, natural, velvety bloom results and remains for many hours quite unaffected by the most trying conditions out of doors or in the ballroom or theatre, and that it gives a much more natural appearance to some skins than does ordinary powder.

Grey Hair.

I have observed many attempts of many people to conceal grey hair. Some of these experiments were amusing, some disastrous, and some were successful. Personally, I believe I shall let my hair turn when the appointed time comes, but if I were going to try to evade it I would give a trial to a real old "grandmother" formula that would probably do the work. This formula, I am informed, has been used with degrees of success for many generations, and consists merely of two ounces of concentrate of tammalite mixed with three ounces of bay rum. It is applied to the grey hair a few times with a small sponge, and ladies tell me it appears to darken the hair to a natural shade, not like a dye, but gradually and naturally.

The Curling Iron.

Don't use a hot iron to curl your hair. Some of my friends make the cunningest sort of curls wherever they want them simply by dampening the hair with liquid silmerine before retiring at night. When the hair is dry in the morning it will be softly curly just where you want it to be. This method is perfectly harmless, even beneficial to the hair, and the curls last a long time. The liquid is quite pleasant and neither sticky nor greasy.

How to Shampoo.

Most women, I am informed, do not know how to use stallax properly when shampooing with it. Unless the hair is naturally very oily, a stallax shampoo may sometimes leave it rather dry. But I am told if you will apply olive oil freely to your hair and scalp just before shampooing with stallax the result is most delightful. The hair will be left clean, soft, bright, and wavy, the olive oil having properly balanced the action of this wonderful hair cleanser.

Care of the Hands.

An excellent method of putting the hands in fine condition and keeping them so is to rub them with bicrolium jelly just before retiring at night. This quickly takes away roughness, redness, tan, &c., and makes them soft, white and smooth. After this has been done, an occasional application will keep them in proper form.

Gladys Cooper

NOTE.—This interesting article on beauty culture in general was written by Miss Gladys Cooper at the request of the manufacturers of Pilenta Soap—the best complexion soap in the world. On sale at all chemists.—[ADVT.]

Still Dancing.

THE fiat has gone forth, once more it is to be dancing, dancing all the time.

We, to be à la mode, must put on our dance frocks, our silken stockings and our shoes and practise the new steps to the new tunes. Where shall we practise? Where shall we dance? Why not at home?

Get an Aeolian 'Vocalion' and you have

A COMPLETE ORCHESTRA always ready and never tired.

Perfect dance time, latest tunes, records dance length, all the best bands and nothing to worry about.

A dozen couples, a few sandwiches, a polished floor and the gramophone and you have all the ingredients for a delightful intimate evening of real entertainment.

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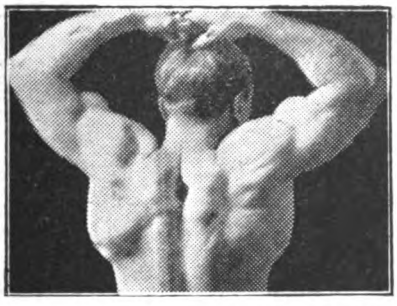

At the conclusion of treatment on October the 22nd, 1919. — Condition : Heart normal. Lungs perfect. Health splendid. Measurements : Weight, 10st. 7lb. Height, 5ft. 1¼in. Neck, 15in. Chest (expanded), 44¼in. Waist, 32in. Forearm, 10in. Biceps, 13in. Triceps, 11in. Thighs, 23in. Calves, 14in.

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Table Knives **23/-** per ½ White Ivorite
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Conquered in 3 days.

Years have passed since I was freed from the drink habit. Since then I have been the means of aiding **thousands of men and women** to give up alcohol. Some have willingly taken treatment, others have been saved without knowing the cause.

The drink craze disappears, and is replaced by a more normal condition of appetite, nerves, etc. **The improvement in the health** of an ex-drinker is marvellous when he gives up alcohol. Men **drinking a bottle of whisky or more daily** are safely and effectively stopped. **No danger to health, but a steady improvement manifests itself from day to day.** There is no inclination for alcohol; the former drinker is surprised and delighted at the great change.

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I WAS BALD

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet thirty years ago I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.

SEEKING A HAIR GROWTH.

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that, in the hope of growing new hair, I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "The white brother without a scalp lock."

AMERICAN INDIANS NEVER BALD.

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands round their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret?

Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.

MY HAIR GREW AGAIN.

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian Elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly.

The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre, and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

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To any person who writes a request for it and encloses sixpence in stamps (or a P.O.) a testing box of Kotalko will be sent post paid. Mention Mrs., Mr., Miss, Rev., etc., and sign name plainly. Kindly address your letter to J. HART BRITTAIN, LTD., 2, PERCY STREET (251 A.F.), LONDON, W.1. After using the testing package, when you observe that your hair is beginning to grow—even if you have been bald for years—you may obtain a further supply from the proprietor.

TEETH ARE A TROUBLE

both coming and going. The great thing for everyone to strive after is to prevent their loss. If moderately good teeth are cleaned regularly night and morning (and, if possible, between meals) with a really antiseptic tooth paste, there is no reason why the teeth should not be perfect throughout life. Beware, however, of the dentifrice that scratches the enamel in the process of whitening the teeth. Remember that **"ENOLIN" TOOTH PASTE** is everybody's favourite dentifrice. *Obtainable everywhere in 3 strengths.*

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Its comfort adds to pleasure : its durability to leisure.

Quality, finish and comfort all the time—of these you are certain when you choose Oak Tree Underwear.

Smooth and soft in texture, it cannot irritate the most sensitive skin. Oak Tree is the underwear of super-wearing qualities, and every garment is guaranteed.

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PAINLESS CHILDBIRTH.—"The Fairy Godmother of Twilight Sleep sent me into a dreamless slumber, and I awoke to find my happy healthy baby by my side."

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nourishes and beautifies the hair, is pleasant in use, and will not injure the most delicate skin.

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THE next time you cut yourself whilst shaving, don't dab a handkerchief at your face half the morning; just apply a touch of Iglodine antiseptic. It will stop the bleeding rapidly, prevent the blood congealing, cleanse the wound and allow the clean surface to granulate and heal. You will also find it remarkably effective for all manner of cuts, bruises, scars, burns, etc.

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-Iglodine- ℗ 26
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NIGHT
AND DAY
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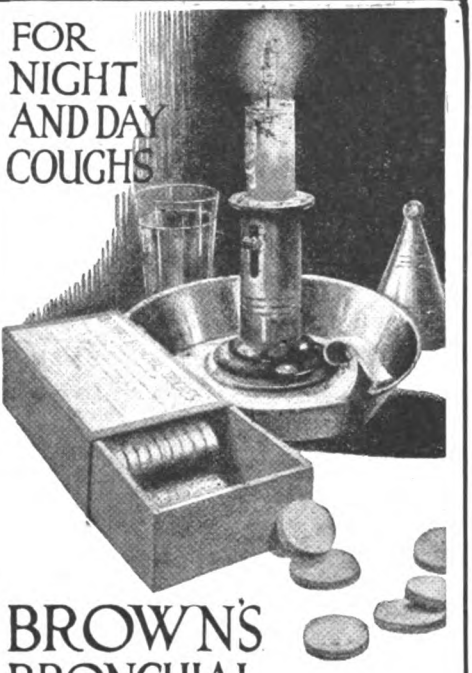

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It gives perfect hearing. Every instrument guaranteed, and each case fitted by a specialist. *Long trial allowed without obligation to purchase.* Full particulars sent FREE by return of post.
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Deadly Catarrh?

(Chronic Cold In The Head).

If you have any doubt about your ailment, ask yourself the following questions:

Is my voice husky?
Do I sneeze frequently?
Do I catch cold easily?
Is the nose stopped up?
Is my hearing affected?
Does my throat feel dry?
Do I feel tired on rising?
Does my nose discharge?
Do I suffer from headache?
Do crusts form in the nose?
Do I expectorate frequently?
Is my sense of smell affected?
Is there fulness in the throat?
Does phlegm drop into my throat?
Do I suffer from noises in the head?
Do I suffer from shortness of breath?
Does a change in the weather affect me?
Do I have to clear the throat frequently?
Is there a pain between or over the eyes?
Is there a fulness or pressure in the head?

If you answer "Yes" to any three of the foregoing you are in the grip of Catarrh, a disease which not only saps your vitality, kills ambition and energy, but only too frequently terminates fatally in Catarrh of the Stomach and dreaded Consumption. Moreover, the constant swallowing of the fetid mucus during sleep slowly but surely poisons the stomach, liver, kidneys, and other organs. You need not, however, suffer another hour if you will only carry out the simple home-treatment which cured me seven years ago, and has, since then, cured hundreds of others.

With my treatment, known as the "Shirley System," relief is apparent from the very first application. The nose becomes clearer, the mucus no longer drops into the back of the throat, the frontal headaches disappear as if by magic, and that "tired feeling" on rising in the morning completely passes away. You will again feel that life is indeed worth living.

No matter how many treatments have been used, do not consider your case hopeless until you have tried the wonderful "Shirley System."

This treatment has proved so remarkably successful even in the worst forms of chronic Catarrh, Deafness, Head Noises, &c., that the Discoverer, Elmer Shirley, will gladly send it on ten days' trial to any sufferer on the distinct understanding that if no benefit is derived no expense of any kind will be incurred. Write to-day (a postcard will do) to Mr. Elmer Shirley (C.30), 52, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

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The Uneeda is the **ONE AND ONLY** absolutely efficient Self Haircutter ever placed on the market; it is sold with a money-back guarantee. The Uneeda enables you to cut your hair as you comb it, from the shortest hairs in the nape of the neck to the longest on the head, and to keep your hair always in the style that suits you best.
Mothers can cut their children's hair.

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The Uneeda saves time and money; it is practically indestructible, and never breaks through ordinary use.

Dealers not stocking the Uneeda should write for trade terms

Complete in Leatherette Plush-lined Case - - - 10/-
Packets of 6 extra blades, 2/6.

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Try these two packets FREE

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The "EVINRUDE" is portable, reliable, and fast. It can be run without previous mechanical experience. If you own an "EVINRUDE" send it to us for overhaul ready for next season.

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5 more Beacon Oilskins as last

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ILLUSTRATED LIST POST FREE. Send for Booklet "Weather Comfort," describing Oilskins and Country Boots for Outdoor Men, Women, and Children.

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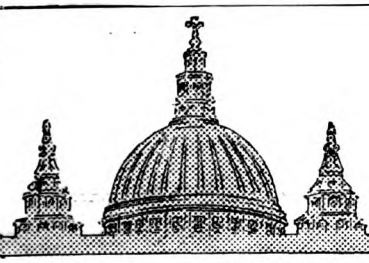

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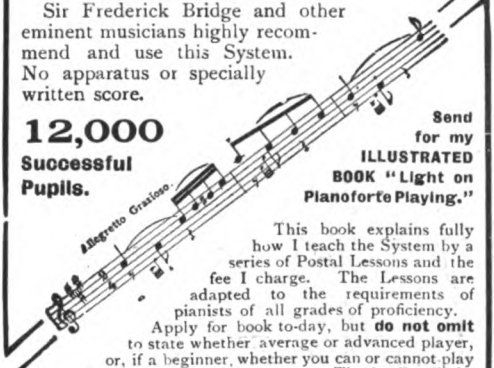

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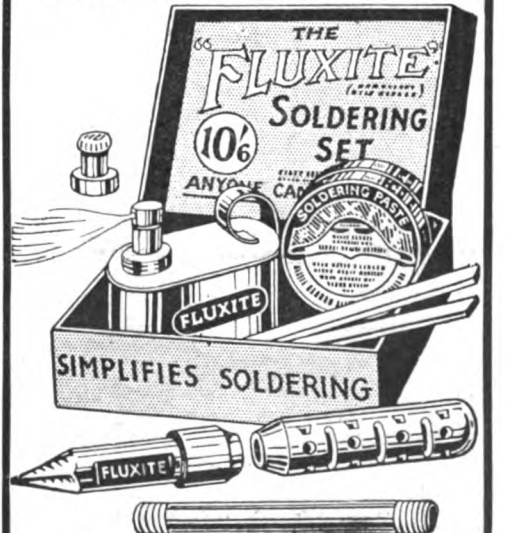

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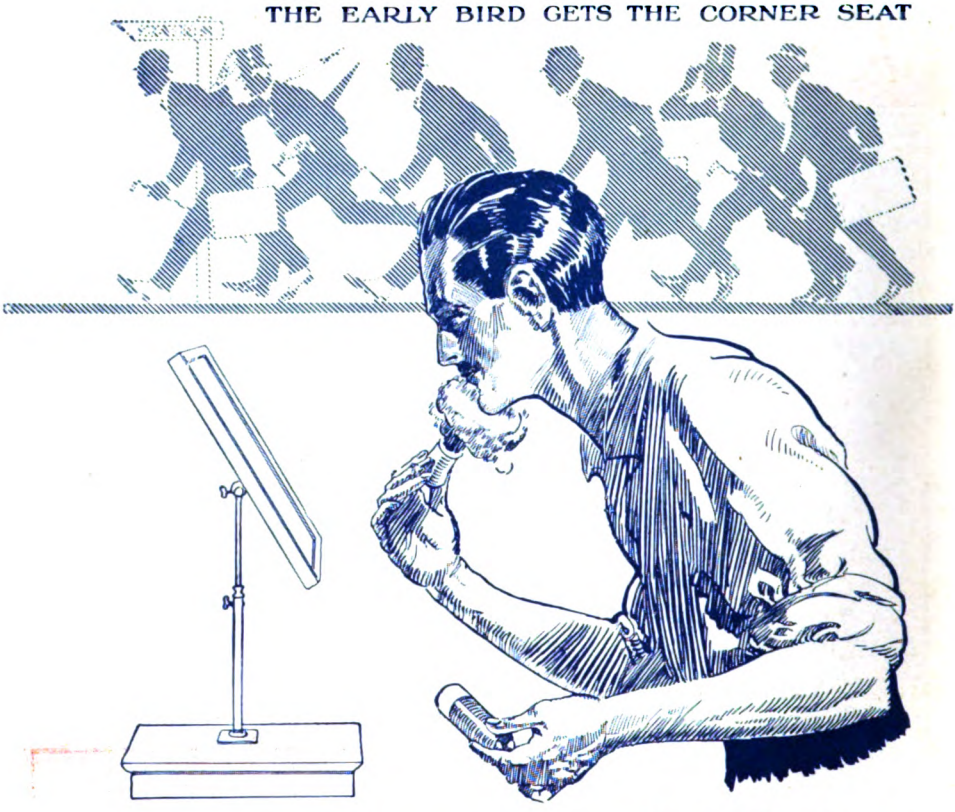

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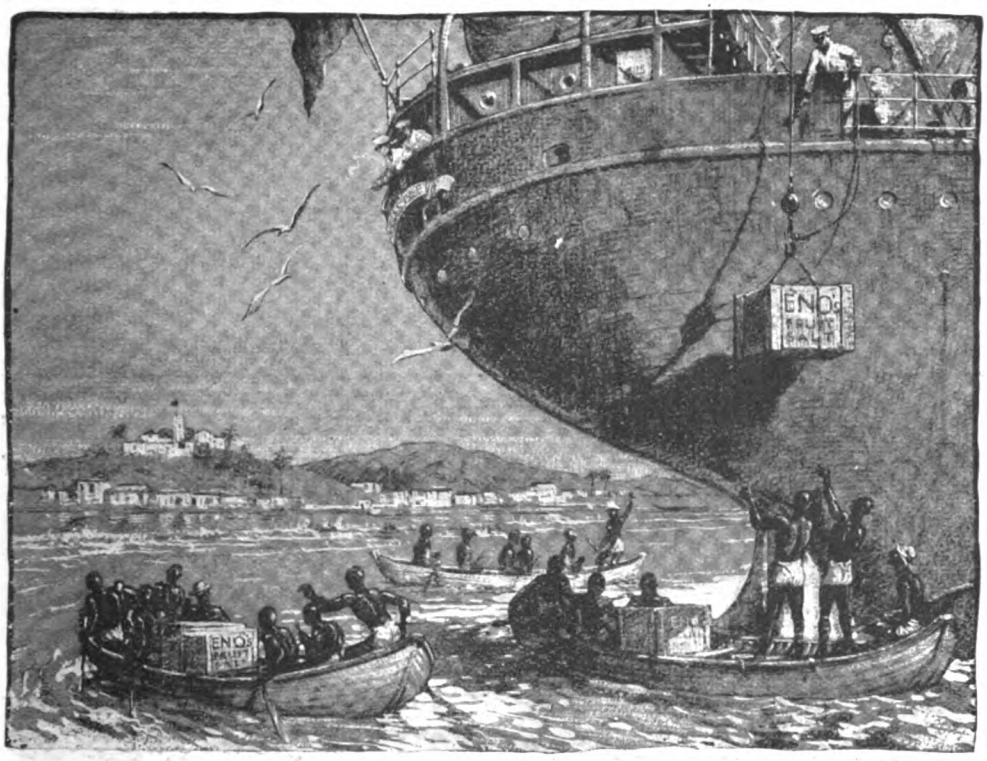

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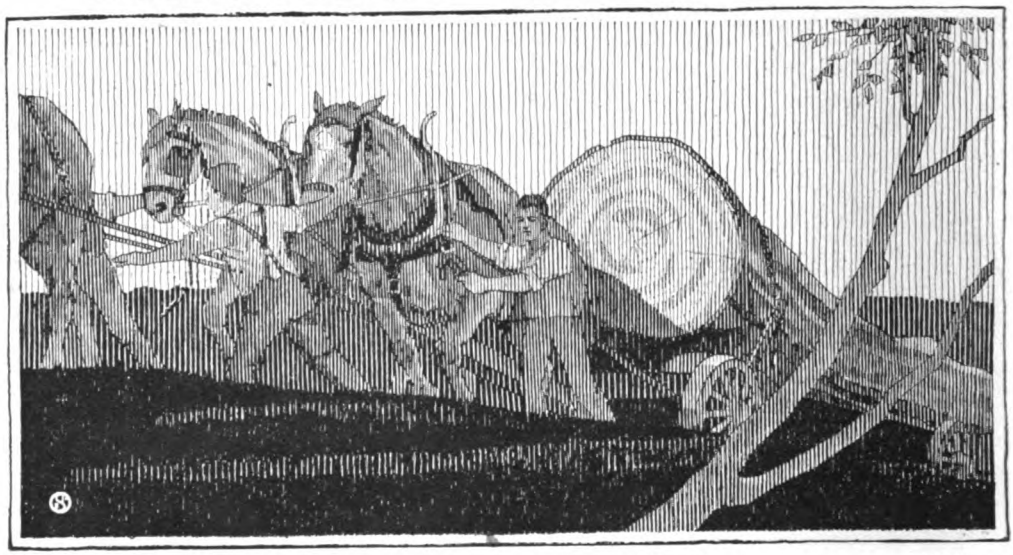

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(*a*) Junior of six ledger clerks
(*b*) Accountant to Limited Company
(*c*) 250 per cent increase

2.
(*a*) A Commissioned Officer in H.M. Army. I had no business experience.
(*b*) Professional Public Accountant
(*c*) Estimate £400 increase

3.
(*a*) Junior Clerk to Chartered Accountant
(*b*) Chartered Accountant
(*c*) 800 per cent increase

4.
(*a*) General Clerk
(*b*) Assistant Accountant
(*c*) 200 per cent increase

5.
(*a*) Clerk
(*b*) General Manager
(*c*) I have now more than 10 times the salary I had when I first enrolled

The originals of these "Questionnaires" have been examined by David Paterson, Chartered Accountant, 138, Bath Street, Glasgow, who certifies that they are genuine.

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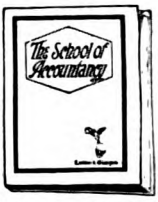

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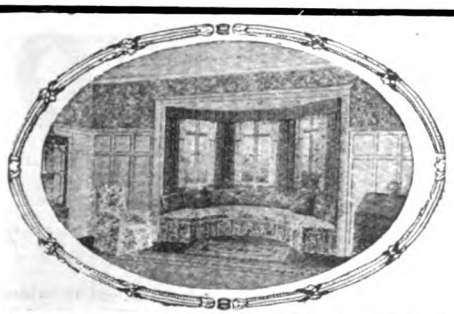

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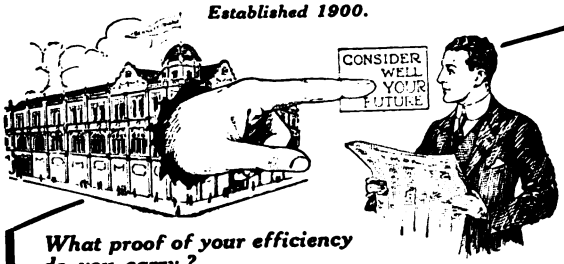

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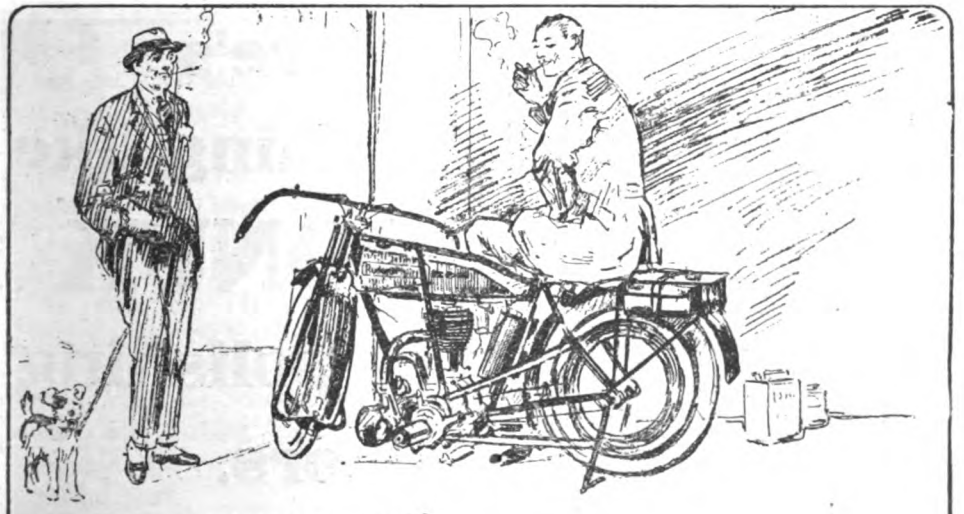

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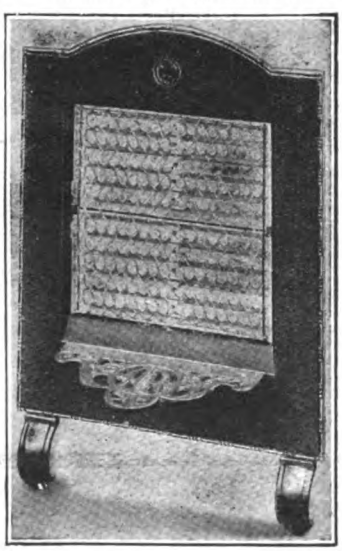

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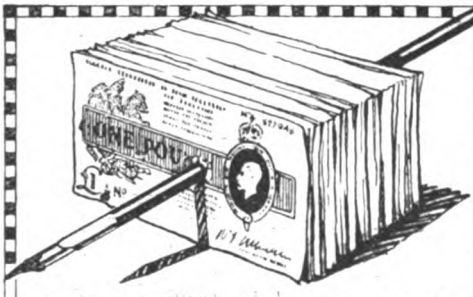

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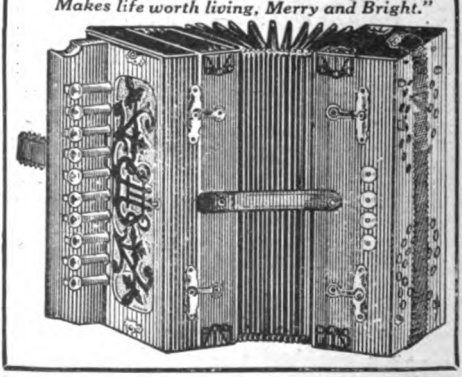

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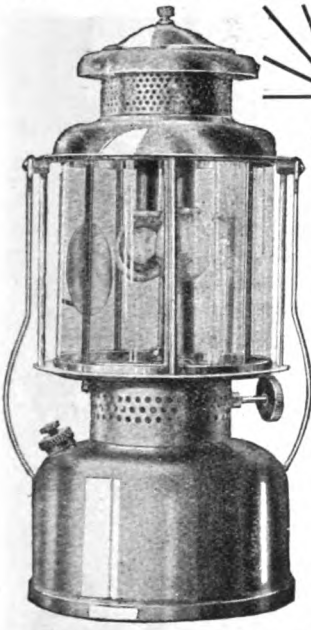

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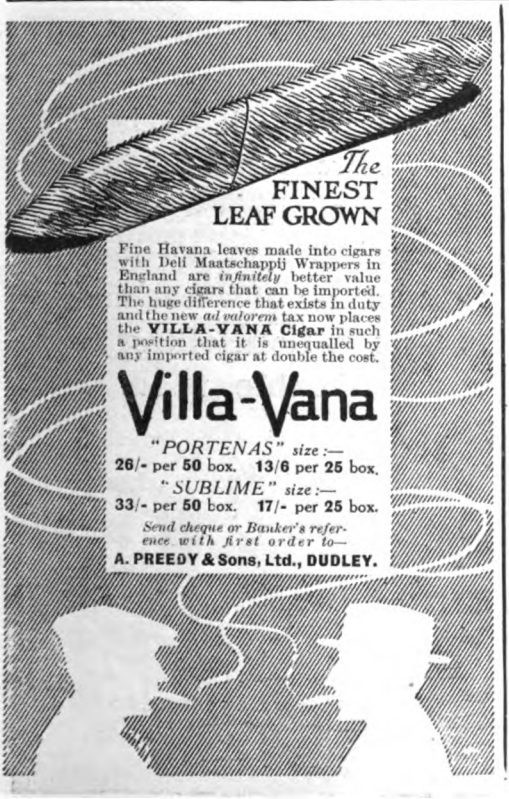

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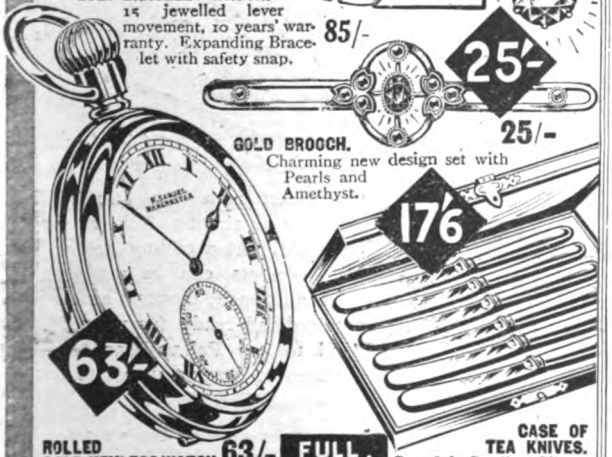

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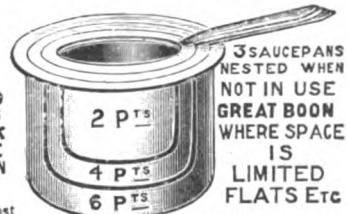

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Noted Authority on Physical Training tells why every sufferer should avoid the use of liver-irritating and habit-forming cathartic drugs, which only produce temporary, convulsive bowel action with invariably bad after-effects. Says try a more natural and lasting way instead.

Simply drink hot curative mineral water for a few days. Easily prepared at home by adding to plain water a compound of the few necessary medicinal ingredients which any chemist can supply at slight cost. See prescription below. Journeying to expensive hot springs is no longer necessary, for the waters have now been accurately analysed and their exact constituent elements made known to the medical profession.

Some good common-sense advice
by W. G. EAST,
Cambridge Coach for 30 years.

Ever had that lazy, listless, "don't care" feeling of constant lassitude, when every move requires special effort and even the brain seems tired, drowsy, and dull?

W. G. East.

It's your liver. Ever feel bilious, nervous, "irritable, headachy," and various other kinds of "achy"? ***It's your liver.*** Ever have dull eyes, yellowish eyeballs, pimply skin, catarrh, coated tongue, offensive breath, insomnia, stomach trouble, heart palpitation, loss of appetite, etc., etc.? ***It's your liver.*** Constipation has even been called "the beginning of all disease," because it introduces into the blood, by absorption from the intestines, various disease-causing poisons which could not possibly even remain in the body otherwise. Poisons and impurities, whether you call them toxins, microbes, bacteria, bacilli, uric and stomach acids, or by any other names, are admittedly the primary cause of serious organic and other disease. Without their presence in the system the disease could not exist.

Obviously, the only way to get rid of body poisons or blood impurities, and do it quickly, is to stimulate a lazy, sluggish liver, flush clogged kidneys, neutralize and wash the fermenting mucus from an acid stomach and clear the sour bile and decaying matter from fouled intestines. Cleanse, sweeten and purify the entire alimentary tract. Then notice how much better you feel as the body's great filters and blood refiners (the liver and kidneys) commence working properly again.

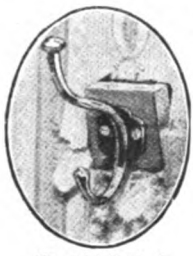
This is what happens when people visit the world-famous springs and drink the wonderful medicinal water found there. It is why they return home feeling as though they had received a brand new set of digestive, blood purifying, filtering and eliminative organs. This, of necessity, means a well-nourished body, good digestion, steady nerves, high vitality, clear eyes, healthy skin, good colour, and entire freedom from bodily aches or pains. In short, it means increased efficiency, both physical and mental.

To purify the blood and rid the system of poisons, never dose yourself with still more poisons in the form of powerful drugs like calomel (mercury) or other drastic purgatives and cathartics which cause bowel movements simply by irritation, and even collect in tissues, or attack the bones. Also avoid the use of cheap, impure salts, etc., which may form lime deposits in the joints, or cause kidney and bladder troubles and gall stones.

Such purely temporary expedients often become habit-forming and cause still worse suffering later on. They remind one of the scriptural character, who, when possessed by a devil, set loose seven others to catch the first, only to find himself possessed in the end by eight devils instead of one.

Instead of taking strong toxic drugs, etc., with their depressing reactions and bad after-constipating effects, try drinking before breakfast and once or twice at any convenient time during the day, for a week or so, a tumblerful of strongly alkaline hot water, containing such harmless but active and natural liver-stimulating, kidney-flushing, blood-purifying, acid-neutralising and system-cleansing ingredients as magnesium, lithium, sodium, calcium, etc. These are the active principles of medicinal constituents found in such world-famous mineral waters as Vittel, Contrexeville, Vichy, Carlsbad, Ems, Wiesbaden, Marienbad, and various others which wealthy sufferers once felt well justified in travelling thousands of miles to visit. Many of these resorts are difficult and expensive to get to, but no one need worry about that now, because, since the waters have all been officially analysed, similar medicinal water can easily be made by anyone at home.

The best way, and in fact the only satisfactory way I know of, to prepare the water at home is to obtain the necessary mineral ingredients already compounded in just the proper proportions and ready for immediate use. The name of the compound which physicians prescribe for this purpose is *Alkia Saltrates* (powder-form) and can be had at little cost from any chemist. The average dose is a level teaspoonful dissolved in a tumbler of hot water, and it forms a very palatable drink, with no disagreeable, bitter, salty, sour or otherwise objectionable taste. Unlike pills or many nauseous medicines, salts, syrups, etc., it is very suitable for children, but, of course, should be given them in especially weak doses.



The Old Method.

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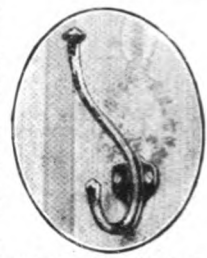
For fixing and hanging Shelves, Cupboards, Coat Hooks, Pictures, Mirrors, Overmantels, Electric, Gas and Sanitary Fittings, Wires, etc. For fixing anything by means of a screw to Walls, Ceilings, etc., of Plaster, Brick, Concrete, Marble, Stone, Tiles, etc.



The Rawlplug Method.

One of the most difficult jobs is to put up a shelf or bookcase where the wall is either too soft for a nail to hold or too hard to get a nail into. An attempt usually results in much damage to wall-paper, and if the job is accomplished it is not very satisfactory or lasting.

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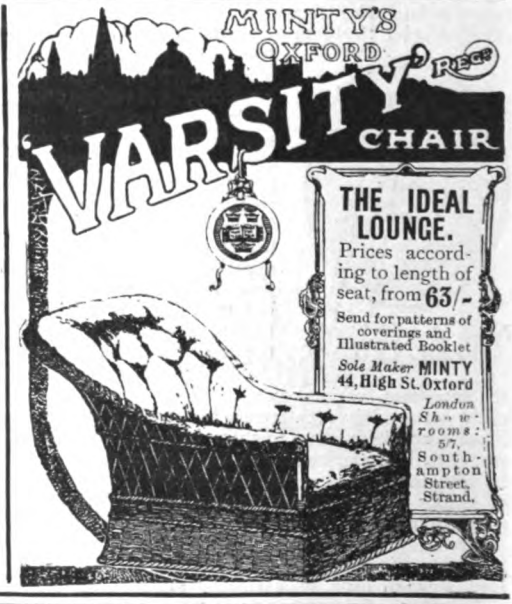

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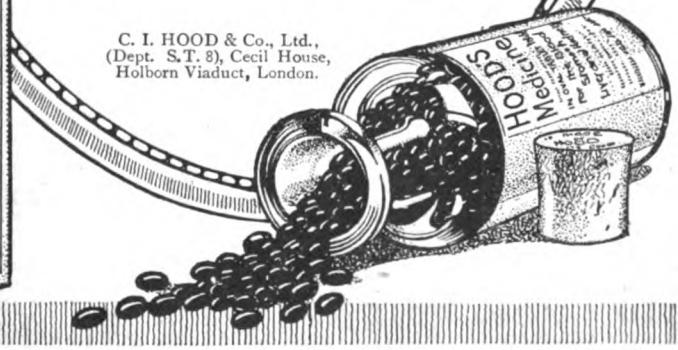

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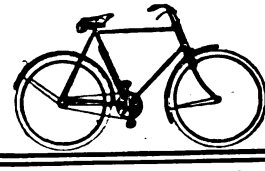

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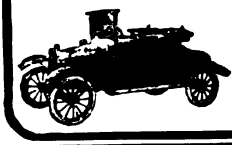

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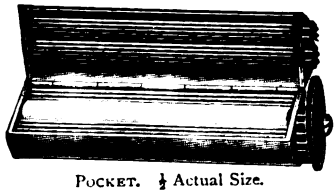

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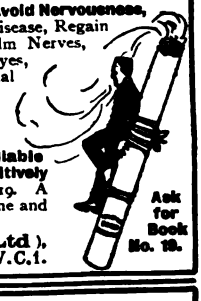

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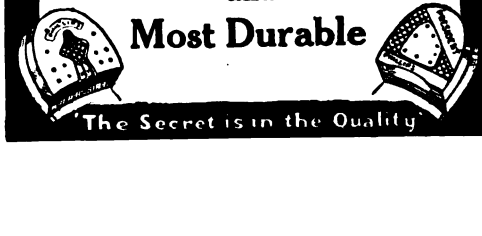

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61 What Next ?

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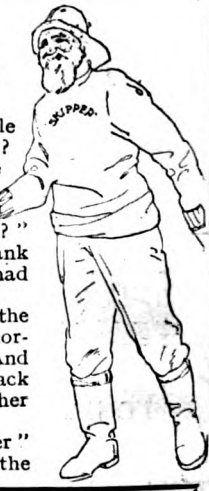

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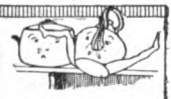

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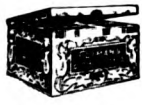

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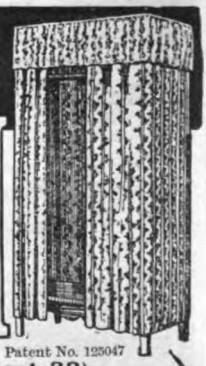

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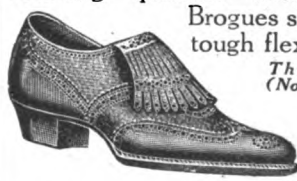

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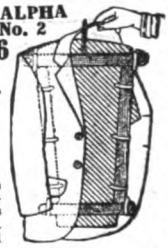

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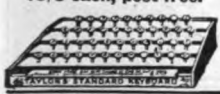

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for February, 1921.

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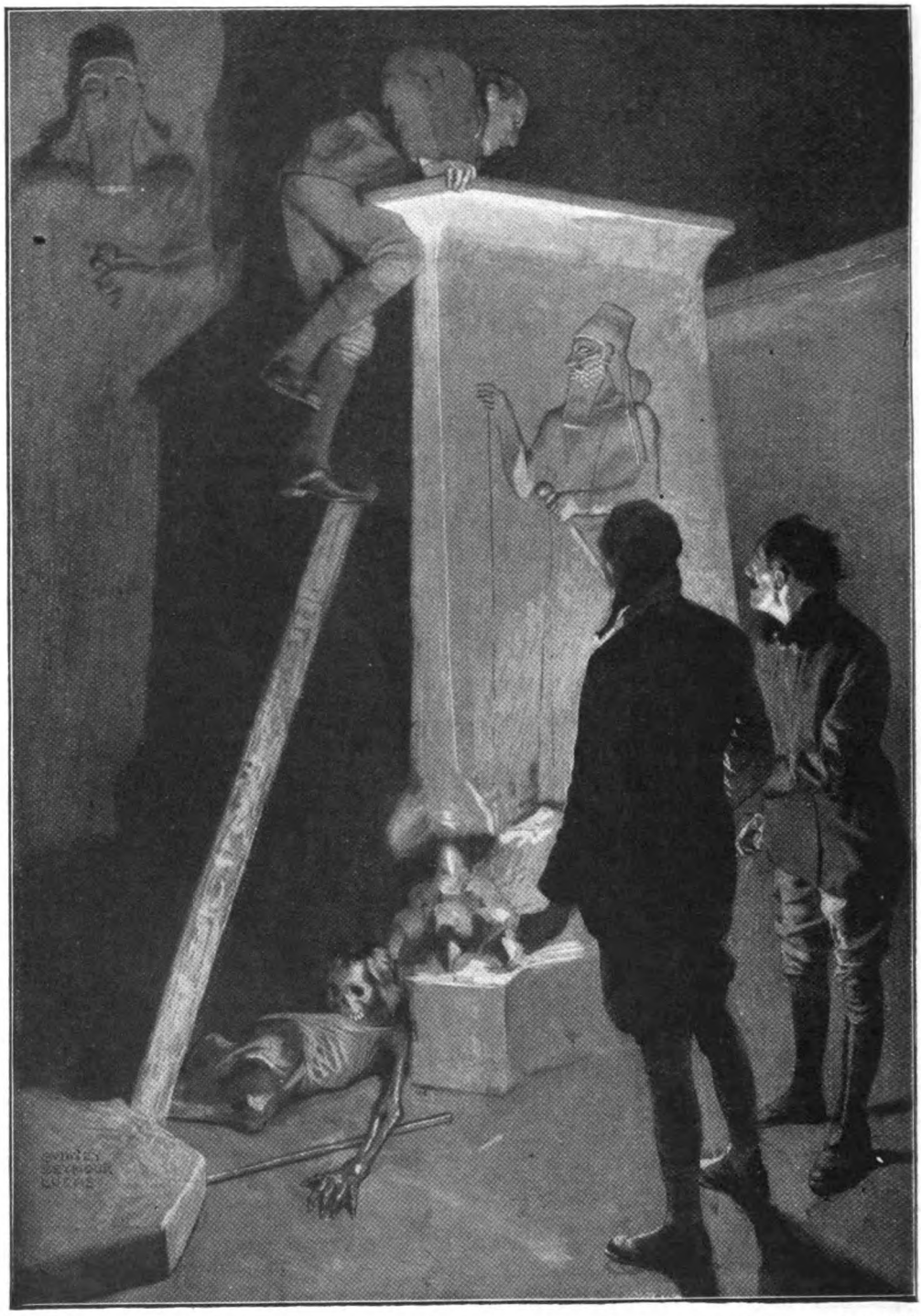

"SWITCHING ON OUR FLASH-LAMPS, WE WENT ON TILL WE REACHED THE FIRST TOMB. THERE, JUST AS THE TWO LADS HAD DESCRIBED IT, WAS THE SLAB ASLANT FROM IT TO THE GROUND—AND UNDERNEATH IT THAT FLESHLESS SKELETON WITH THE IRON BAR BY HIS SIDE."

(*See page* 104.)

The Treasure of the Tombs

by F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

Illustrated by SYDNEY SEYMOUR LUCAS

I.

IF ever a man was emphatically and articulately thankful that the war was over and that he could return to the comfortable if humdrum ways of peace, that man was myself. The contrast of my quiet, cool office in London town after three years of the heat, dust, and flies of Mesopotamia was inexpressibly grateful to me. And although my military service, thanks to my job on the staff, was certainly not only far more interesting but accompanied by infinitely less hardship than the experiences of most of my comrades, I told myself, as once more I took my seat in my mahogany and red morocco private room, that I had had enough adventure for a lifetime. Nothing would induce me—I remember my father's nod of satisfaction as I said it; he felt that he could safely resign the management of the business into my hands—nothing would induce me, short of extreme national danger, to quit the solid comfort of three meals a day and the club at the end of it for that fallacious lure of the unexplored horizon which had thrown so strong a spell over me when I had volunteered at the beginning of the war. And I believed myself. I did not even feel the pull, as did so many of those who fought in the war, of those old battlefields of France and Belgium, so familiar to me in 1915. Sometimes, it is true, I thought of a few of my old comrades and speculated on what had happened to them, but I kept in touch with none. The war faded into a dream-memory, remote from actuality.

Remote though it was, nevertheless when one day my clerk tapped at the door and brought in two cards, inscribed respectively Richard Franks and Henry Jefferson, I had an instant vision of two dirty, haggard flying-officers standing before me in my map-hung office in the old palace at Mosul. Their machine had crashed whilst on reconnaissance over the mountain-range of the Jebel Abjad, and they had escaped to our lines only after miraculous and hair-raising adventures sufficient to fill a book. My report of the valuable information they had brought back had contributed not a little to their promotion. I smiled at the memory of the two cool-headed young daredevils, who had narrated their thrilling experiences as though they were the most ordinary thing in the world.

"Show them in," I said, as I rose from my seat to welcome them.

I recognized at once, despite the disguise of their civilian clothes, the two young men who came rather diffidently into my room. Obviously they were awed by the unfamiliar surroundings of commerce.

"Good morning, Major," said Franks, a

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tall, thin young fellow with an aquiline nose on a determined face oddly out of keeping with his nervous manner. One would never have imagined that, single-handed, in what he called a "dog-fight," he had brought down three German machines attached to the Turkish army.

"'Morning, Major," ventured Jefferson, sententiously, evidently not less nervous. He was younger than Franks—not more than twenty-two or three, a mere boy, fair-haired and blue-eyed, the typical stripling who, in thousands, manned and fought England's air-fleets during the war. I noticed that, despite the prejudices of his kind, he carried a somewhat bulky brown-paper parcel.

"Good morning, both of you," I responded heartily, genuinely gratified by their visit. They brought into my work-a-day office a touch of the past which seemed pleasantly romantic in the retrospect. "Glad to see you! Sit down." They subsided rather sheepishly into the nearest chairs. I held out my cigarette-case. "What's the news? Anything I can do for you?"

They helped themselves to cigarettes and then looked at each other in embarrassment, each evidently hoping the other would take upon himself the task of opening their business.

Finally they both spoke at once.

"The fact is, Major——"

"We want you to lend us three thousand pounds!"

They both stopped. Franks frowned at Jefferson in deprecation of this bluntly undiplomatic approach.

I laughed.

"Three thousand pounds! That's a tall order, young gentlemen." I felt old enough to be their father, and had some difficulty in keeping my countenance as I looked at their deadly-serious young faces. "What do you want with three thousand pounds?"

There was another pause of embarrassed silence, and then Jefferson nudged his senior.

"*You* tell him, Dicky!" he said, in a hoarse whisper. "You can explain things."

DICKY FRANKS flushed and his brow corrugated for a moment of concentrated thought. Then he dived a hand into his breast-pocket and fished out a map which I recognized at once as of Army origin. In fact, as he unfolded it, it proved to be our old staff map of the Mosul area. The young fellow looked up at me and cleared his throat.

"You remember, Major, that Jefferson and I crashed one day in the Jebel Abjad—in 1918?"

I smiled.

"Perfectly. If my memory is not amiss, I got both you harum-scarum young devils a decoration for that—not to mention another pip."

Franks nodded acquiescence, his face grave.

"You did, Major. Well——" he hesitated, fumbling for an opening—"the fact is we didn't tell you quite the true story about that stunt——" He paused, moistening his lips in his nervousness.

"What do you mean?" I asked. I am afraid there was a sharp severity in my voice. I had an unpleasant vision of having been made a fool of, of having recommended these two young devils on an utterly fictitious story. It flashed into my mind that they had come to me, conscience-stricken, to confess. "Didn't you crash way back in the Jebel Abjad as you said you did?"

Franks's smile relieved me.

"Oh, yes, we crashed right enough, Major—but not exactly as we said we did. All we told you was true. Only we left some of it out."

Young Jefferson wagged his head in emphatic corroboration.

"That's it, Major. There's some of it we didn't want to tell just then. And we've come to tell you now."

Franks threw a glance admonitory of caution towards his companion.

"Yes," he said, a certain reluctance in his voice, as though afraid to give himself away too quickly. "We want to tell you the whole story, Major—but first I—we—want you to promise that whatever happens you won't mention a word of it to anyone else. That's only fair, isn't it, Harry?" He turned to young Jefferson for support.

"We know we can trust you, Major," interjected Jefferson.

"Of course you can!" I said, seating myself again in my chair and lighting my own cigarette. "I'll keep your confidence, whatever it is. Fire away—and cut out the 'Major'! I'm a civilian, and my name's Ogilvy." My smile was intended to put both of them at their ease.

Franks took up his story, reassured.

"Well, Major—sorry—Mr. Ogilvy," he smiled at his automatic slip—"we came down twice on that stunt in the Jebel Abjad——"

"Twice?" I queried, in surprise. "You only mentioned once in your report to me."

"I know, Major—Mr. Ogilvy," said Franks. "That's the point. It's the other time we've come to tell you about now."

"Go ahead," I said. "I'm listening."

"Well, the details of that flight don't matter," he resumed, playing nervously with the open map on his knees as he spoke. "You remember we'd got a roving commission over the Jebel Abjad—reconnaissance

to see if old Johnny Turk had tucked himself away in any of the valleys. It was top-hole weather for observation—clear as possible—but we flew all the morning without a sign of the Turk.

"We circled round to the north-west for a bit before making for home, and searched up and down the cracks of those mountains pretty thoroughly. Suddenly we saw all round us one of those big ugly thunderstorms which spring up from nowhere in no time among the mountains. It was a rotten place to be caught in. We were about the middle of the range and following a valley, the machine a thousand feet or so below the summits on both sides. I put her nose up at once—and just as we were climbing out of the hole we were in, the confounded old bus missed fire! The engine stopped dead. Just the sort of thing that would happen, of course, in a thunderstorm on top of a mountain range!

"I saw the barograph needle switch round as we dropped—and I tell you I thought it was all up with us. We were already once more below the summit of the mountain on our left. The valley bottom was boulders. Suddenly I saw that a broad ledge projected from the flank of the mountain, a terrace two or three hundred yards wide. It was almost below us as I spotted it—an unobstructed stretch of smooth rock. I made for it instinctively—there was no time to think—the second flash of lightning flickered all over the machine. I put her down to it, and just as the rain came down on us in bucketfuls we touched and taxied along the ledge. I swerved round to get her head to wind against the gust that blew back from the mountain-side, and pulled her up by a miracle.

"We jumped out, lightning blazing all round us and rain coming down like a thousand waterfalls. It seemed a pretty hopeless place for shelter—and shelter at that minute was worth our next leave, and that's saying something in Mespot. Suddenly, straight ahead of us, I spotted the mouth of a cave. We both dashed for it like rabbits to a hole.

"IT was a cave all right, and there we were, sheltered from the storm, with the lightning playing all over our machine outside. Our chances of ever getting back again looked pretty slim at that moment, I don't mind admitting. If the old bus was struck we hadn't an earthly of ever getting down from that mountain. We looked at each other in the lightning flashes, and we both got the idea to explore the cave to take our minds off the unpleasant possibilities outside.

"It was a big lofty hole, that cave, and the first thing that hit both of us was that its sides had been smoothed by human hands. The chisel marks were still visible. That was surprising enough, for the place seemed absolutely inaccessible. Of course, it occurred to both of us that if people had taken the trouble to climb up here to smooth the walls of a cave they must have had some pretty good reason for doing so. We'd both got electric torches in our tunics and we set out to find that reason.

"It didn't take us long. Twenty or thirty yards inside that cave were three enormous tombs—sarcophagi, don't you call them?—supported on pedestals of squared stone. They were carved all over with figures and covered with roof-like slabs of solid rock. At least, two of them were. We saw at once that we weren't the first to discover those tombs. Someone had been there before us. The slab on the nearest one had been prised off sideways—and underneath the edge of it was a skeleton with an iron bar alongside. Evidently, just as he had got the slab off, it had fallen on him and killed him.

"I tell you we felt pretty excited as we climbed up the pedestal and flashed our torches inside that tomb. The original occupant was still there all right—at least, bits of his skeleton were. But that wasn't what interested us. There were heaps of broken ornaments and things round that skeleton, and the body rested on a bed of what we first thought were neat little bricks. Look!" He extracted a small bar from his pocket and handed it to me. "What do you make of that?"

I took it curiously. It was heavy yellow metal.

"By Jove!" I exclaimed. "This is solid gold!" I turned it over in my fingers and saw upon one of its small ends an embossed oval cartouche filled with hieroglyphic figures. "You've come across the burial treasure of some old Assyrian king, my lads!" I am naturally of an unenthusiastic temperament, but I utterly failed to control the excitement which leaped up in me. "What an extraordinary adventure!"

Franks nodded gravely.

"What do you reckon that is worth?" he asked.

I balanced it in my hand. It weighed very nearly a couple of pounds.

"About a hundred and fifty pounds sterling, I should say," I hazarded.

"Then, Major—Mr. Ogilvy—there's a hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of gold in that tomb alone! We counted the top layer of bricks, and there were about two hundred—and we estimated that there were at least five layers of them. They're all the same size. Jefferson here has another."

Young Jefferson pulled out a gold brick from his pocket also. It was identical with the first. I put them side by side on my desk.

"I suppose you stuffed your pockets full?" I said, highly interested and a little envious. "Lucky young beggars!"

The pair of them looked sheepishly at each other. Then Franks laughed.

"Well—to tell the truth, Major—all of a sudden we both got wind up. A most horrible moaning sound came from somewhere out of the darkness of that cave. It was most uncanny, especially with that skeleton pinned under the slab. We didn't stop to think. We both cut and ran for the entrance, scared out of our lives. All we got was the one brick each we had slipped into our pockets and a lump of stone broken off the slab which Jefferson was holding when we heard the noise."

Jefferson undid his parcel.

"HERE it is," he said, passing it over to me. Part of a winged bull remained on the fragment, which was incised with characters unknown to me but obviously of great antiquity.

"What happened next?" I asked.

"Well—the storm had ceased. It was bright sunshine outside and neither of us felt like going into that dark cave again. Our nerves were all to pieces. We tinkered up the old engine—it was only a choked jet—and took off from that ledge just as quick as might be."

"You left the treasure?" I did not conceal my surprise.

Jefferson laughed boyishly.

"I guess you would have left it too, just then, Major," he said. "That infernal moan was no joke—I know I turned over pretty queer inside me when I heard it. It seemed to go right through you. Ugh!" he shuddered. "I suppose we were a bit tuned up just then," he added, in self-apology. "We'd had a near shave before we got on that ledge."

"Go on," I said, nodding my appreciation of their feelings. "What next?"

"That's all. You know the rest of it," said Franks. "Just as we were getting clear of the mountain the engine gave out again and we crashed properly. Everything else happened just as we reported it."

"And the gold is still there?"

"So far as we know. We never had a chance to go back." Franks got up from his seat, came across to my desk, and spread out the map. He put his finger on an inked cross in the middle of the brown intricacy of the mountain-ranges. It looked a most inaccessible spot. "Here's the place!" he said. "Think of it! Pretty nearly half a million pounds' worth of solid gold waiting for us! Worth trying for, isn't it, Major?"

"You are assuming that the other tombs also contain an equivalent amount," I said, damping down his enthusiasm in an effort to control sudden wild fancies of my own. "And you don't realize the difficulties. The place could only be reached by a long and most dangerous expedition. All that country is worse than ever since the Armistice. It is inhabited by wild Kurds who would make a virtue of cutting your throats. Besides, from your description, it would be no easy mountaineering feat to climb up to that ledge."

"Next door to impossible, I should say," agreed Franks, cheerfully. "I can't imagine how the poor devil who was crushed under the slab ever got there—or how they put the tombs there, for that matter. Perhaps there has been a landslide since. No man could climb to that ledge now, that's certain."

"Then how do you propose to get there?" I asked.

The two young men smiled at each other in amusement at my simplicity.

"By aeroplane, of course!" they said, in one breath.

"So that's why you want my three thousand pounds?" My smile was not so cynical as I intended it to be. The fascination of the thing had already got a greater hold over me than I realized.

It was. Breathlessly, both of them speaking at once, they informed me that they had found the ideal machine—an ex-Army bomber designed to carry four tons of explosives and fitted for a flight to India that had been given up at the last moment. It had a saloon in which we—they included me in the expedition with an amazingly calm assumption of my assent—could sleep comfortably and get our meals. It would lift easily the cargo of gold—three tons they reckoned it to be—and had a petrol capacity sufficient for the journey. They offered me a third share of the treasure if I would finance the expedition. Apparently, also, they had set their hearts upon my accompanying them.

"Not so fast," I protested. "I've got a business I can't leave."

"You take holidays sometimes, don't you?" countered Franks. "We shall be back again inside a fortnight."

The upshot of it all was that, when at the end of an hour they left me, they carried off with them my cheque for two thousand pounds for the immediate purchase of that aeroplane, and I—definitely committed to what in solitude I now saw to be a mad adventure—sat in my chair, puffing at my pipe, and staring at the mysterious inscription incised upon the slab of stone. Of course, it conveyed nothing to me, but I

"He extracted a small bar from his pocket and handed it to me. 'By Jove!' I exclaimed. 'This is solid gold!'"

could not help a considerable curiosity as to its meaning. I felt rather grimly that at least it would be satisfying to know whose tomb it was that we were proposing to rifle.

It occurred to me to take it up to the Assyrian Department of the British Museum, and then a happier thought followed upon the heels of the first. McPherson at the club! If anyone could decipher that inscription, it would be old Mac! He had devoted the best part of his life to Assyrian archæology. I wrapped up that slab of stone in Jefferson's brown paper, and five minutes later I was in a taxi on my way to the club.

McPherson was there sure enough. I went straight to my point and, without telling him how this fragment came into my hands, I opened my parcel and asked him if he could decipher the inscription. He took it with the eager interest of the man of science presented with a new specimen, pored it over as he twisted it in his hands, nodded his head vigorously.

"A very interesting piece, Mr. Ogilvy!" he said. "Most interesting! The British Museum would be real glad of it. Where did you get it?"

"Never mind where I got it," I replied. "Can you read the inscription?"

"Easily, man! Easily!" he said. "There is no difficulty whatever about it. It is mutilated—incomplete, of course. But what is there is plain as print! It is in the usual cuneiform character—the middle Assyrian variety. I should say it dates from about 1500 B.C."

"Interpret, O Sage!" said I.

He adjusted his spectacles and, following the nail-shaped characters from left to right with his finger, translated as follows:—

"I, Sarchon, King of Kings, son of Nimrot, King of Kings, lying in this tomb, say, 'Come not to open this tomb. He who shall remove the stone that covers me shall die and in the grave find not repose, neither shall the sun shine upon him nor his kindred know his fate.' That's all," said McPherson, looking up at me through his spectacles. "The inscription is broken at that point."

"You read it like a book!" I said, in admiration.

"Pooh!" he replied. "'Tis easy enough. It presents no points of difficulty. There are hundreds of inscriptions like that. This happens to be a king's, that's all. The interest is in the name of the monarch. Otherwise it is quite commonplace."

I thought of the skeleton lying pinned under the slab in that dark cave.

"*Is it?*" I said, with an emphasis which made him look curiously at me.

He gave me an odd smile.

"Be careful how you go digging about in those tombs, young man," he said.

Unwilling to expose myself to the inquiries obviously on the tip of his tongue, I made an excuse to cut short the conversation. But, as I went out of the club, I felt that my enthusiasm for the adventure had considerably evaporated. I could not help seeing that confounded skeleton with the iron bar beside him.

II.

I WILL not here dwell upon the details of our preparations for the flight. Suffice it that within a week Franks and Jefferson had flown the aeroplane over to the grounds of the country place near London which I had recently purchased. In the absence of a hangar, firmly secured tarpaulins protected it at once from the weather and the curiosity of the local inhabitants. So far as my unskilled eye could judge, it was a beautiful machine, eminently suited for our purpose. She carried fuel enough in her tanks for a fifty-hour flight, and more could be stowed in the interior. Her water-tank contained two hundred gallons of that vital necessity in the desert. There was ample storage capacity for all the provisions we should require. The two young men were in ecstasies of enthusiasm over her, but I confess that, novice as I was in this form of travel, it was with considerable awe that I stood under the vast spread of her wings and looked up to the cabin which was to carry us, high above the clouds, those thousands of miles to the mountains beyond the Mesopotamian desert which seemed, here in this English countryside, fantastically unreal in their remoteness.

But during the next two weeks there was little time for brooding. The die was cast. I could not decently turn back if I would, and I will confess that sometimes the fascination of our adventure gripped me as strongly as it did the two young pilots. We kept our project as quiet as possible. Those official inquiries which could not be avoided we satisfied with the story of an independent flight to India.

Our route was mapped out in easy stages—six hundred and fifty miles to Marseilles for the first day, six hundred to Messina, eight hundred to Alexandria. Thence, pushing boldly to the north-east, we might, by starting at dawn, make the final one thousand three hundred miles to our destination in one flight if circumstances were favourable. If not, we could come down in the desert for one night. Franks and Jefferson, of course, proposed to fly the machine in alternate shifts. My *rôle* was that of cook and steward. Naturally, in view of possible trouble with the desert tribes, should we descend among them, we provided ourselves with arms and

ammunition, in addition to the implements necessary for breaking open the other tombs.

At last all was ready. I shall never forget the thrill with which, in the fresh brightness of an English summer morning, I saw the great machine, stripped of her last coverings, poised on the greensward in waiting for the start. Franks was already at his post in the pilot's seat, and first one, then the other of her engines whirred in a deep-toned roar as he tested them, flattening the grass in the wind under the propellers. Jefferson was clambering over the wings in a final examination of every stay and strut. I climbed up the ladder into the interior. My butler, gloomy in disapproval of these newfangled contraptions, but dutifully resolved to be with me until the last moment, pulled away the ladder and shouted " Good-bye, sir," in a tone strongly suggestive of an eternal farewell. I saw him dodge back out of the wind of the accelerated propellers. " Right away ! " shouted Jefferson, cheerfully, clambering from the wing into the interior.

The engines leaped to a synchronized deafening roar. Through the windows I saw the grass flit past, drop away from us. The trees around my house sank suddenly—we were up ! House and trees twirled away from us as we climbed in a long sweep over the foreshortened figure of the butler waving his valedictions. They reappeared again, far below us, tiny like toys. Then they slipped back out of vision, left behind. We roared over a patchwork of miniature fields, bound—it was almost inconceivable—over distant lands and seas for the vast spaces of the desert and those long-talked-of mountains which loomed, like a mirage in my imagination, beyond its yellow immensity.

III.

MOSUL, white among its verdure, on the nearer bank of the blue Tigris forking about its islands, showed up ahead of us. On the other side of the stream, plainly discernible, were the mounds which covered all that remained of the glory of ancient Nineveh—the city where perhaps, thirty-five centuries ago, had been hammered into shape those gold bricks which had lured us all the way from the heart of a distant Empire greater even than that which here had once been the ultimate of human grandeur. Franks and Jefferson grinned at each other as they glanced down at the white mosque and took a bearing over the confused mass of wooded foothills to the north and east of Mosul towards a stupendous snow-clad peak —the Judi Dagh, I remembered its name—which towered in the distance above the endless chaos of sternly rugged mountains stretching far and wide and reaching back, to the limits of vision, into the recesses of Persia. I stood behind the two lads in the pilot-chamber, straining my eyes towards our destination. In which of those cleft gorges was hollowed the tomb of the three kings on their lofty terrace ?

We sped onwards. Beyond the first range of mountains a valley dipped itself into a bowl of green where white houses twinkled among the trees—Amadiyah ! We soared over it, swung to the north-west and then to the west, towards another wilderness of hills. Our pilots were following their original course. A silence as of death seemed to brood over this sterile desolation of crag and boulder. The roar of our engines re-echoed from it with an alien sound as we dipped below the summits in scrutiny of one valley after another.

Suddenly Jefferson pointed ahead of us, one hand clutching at the shoulder of his comrade seated at the controls. " There it is ! "

I looked, with a thrill of excitement. There in front of us, a thousand feet or more below the summit of the mountain, but thousands of feet above the bed of the sombre ravine which dropped away from it in a sheer precipice, was a long, broad terrace, obviously artificial. We swung round above it, commenced a cautious descent. It would be no joke to be caught in a sudden air-flurry in such a place. The roar of the engines ceased suddenly. An uncanny silence enveloped us with their cessation. None of us spoke. I could feel my heart beating in my breast. Our nose went down and the rock rushed up towards us, became a wall upon our left hand. Below us that smooth terrace, larger and larger with every second, rose and broadened. The engines started again in a quick brief roar which reverberated endlessly after they were abruptly stilled. We swung round towards the mountain, touched and skimmed across the ledge at an angle, slowed with a quick turn perpendicular to the wall of rock, stopped less than a hundred feet away from it. We had arrived !

LIKE three eager schoolboys we tumbled out of the machine, ran along the face of the rock. At first glance I noticed what my companions, too preoccupied with the storm, had failed to observe upon their first visit. The precipice which towered above us was a picture-gallery of ancient Assyrian art. Great winged bulls, eagle-headed human figures of colossal size, in flat relief, dominated an endless succession of sculptured scenes, comparatively miniature, depicting the wars and conquests of a vanished empire.

A shout from Franks, in advance of us, told that he had found the entrance to the cave. A pair of vast human-headed bulls arched their wings above its opening. The

three of us stopped at the portal. A sudden awe came over us as we peered into its obscurity, a feeling of an indefinable presence that pervaded the atmosphere.

"Listen!" whispered Franks, clutching at my arm.

From the interior came a long weird moan that swelled and died away. We sprang back, a primitive terror quick upon us. Then, as silence once more fell upon that lonely terrace, we crept forward again to the entrance.

A little wind stirred into whorls the dust about our feet as we stood under the archway of those mighty wings. Once more the weird moan issued drearily from the cave. My faculties, heightened with excitement, leaped to an association of ideas.

"All right!" I cried to my companions. "All right! It's nothing to be afraid of!"

Those cunning old artificers, of a piece with those who had contrived the statue of Memnon in Egypt, had hollowed that rock to such acoustic properties that a breath of wind blowing into it resounded magnified, as from a trumpet, in that mysterious moan so eminently calculated to unnerve the least superstitious. I explained it to the two lads.

"All very well," said Franks, "but I propose we go back to the old bus and have a meal before we risk ourselves in here. We've got plenty of time. We shall feel all the stronger after we've filled up. What do you say, Harry?"

"I think so too," said Jefferson. "We've got to have a meal anyway. And personally I want to make the fewest possible visits to the inside of this cave and get finished with it as soon as may be. It may be only the wind, of course. But I don't like it, all the same. Besides, we must go back for the crowbars."

IT was well that we did so. Eager as we were to discover the entrance to the cave, we had forgotten to fasten down the aeroplane in any way. As we approached it, we noticed that it seemed farther from the rock wall than we had left it. A moment later a gust of wind, reflected from that sculptured surface, moved it perceptibly towards the sheer gulf a few hundred yards behind it. Dicky Franks shamed us both with his instant presence of mind. While we stared aghast, he darted forward to the machine, swung himself up over the lower wing into the pilot-compartment, started the engines. He taxied her gently back, and Jefferson and myself made her fast with ropes to projecting points of the rock.

The young man's face was white as he dropped out of the machine and rejoined us.

"They're trying to kill us!" he said, hoarsely, his voice unsteady with a genuine fear.

"Nonsense, Dicky!" I replied. "It was just the wind."

He turned upon me.

"This wind about here is too confoundedly intelligent for my liking!" he said. "I tell you, I've got a feeling——"

"Keep it to yourself, then, my lad!" I said, sharply. "You'll be giving us all cold feet in a minute with your sickly imaginations. We have not flown over three thousand miles to this cave to be put off now with superstitious fancies."

"The Major's right, Dicky," said Jefferson. "We made up our minds to come back for that gold, and here we are. Let's get on with it. We'll have a bite of food first—and then to work!"

Franks remained silent. I could see that he was badly shaken. However, as all three of us sat in the saloon about our meal he recovered his cheerfulness.

"We shall have to make a camp of it, Major," he said. "For to-night at least. We can't shift three tons of gold between now and dark."

"Three tons!" murmured young Jefferson. "Ye gods! Three tons of gold—think of it! It's got to be a full-sized ghost that will scare me off three tons of gold!"

Dicky frowned, but made no comment.

"Yes, we shall certainly have to stay for the night," I agreed. "But we'll get as much as possible on board while the day lasts."

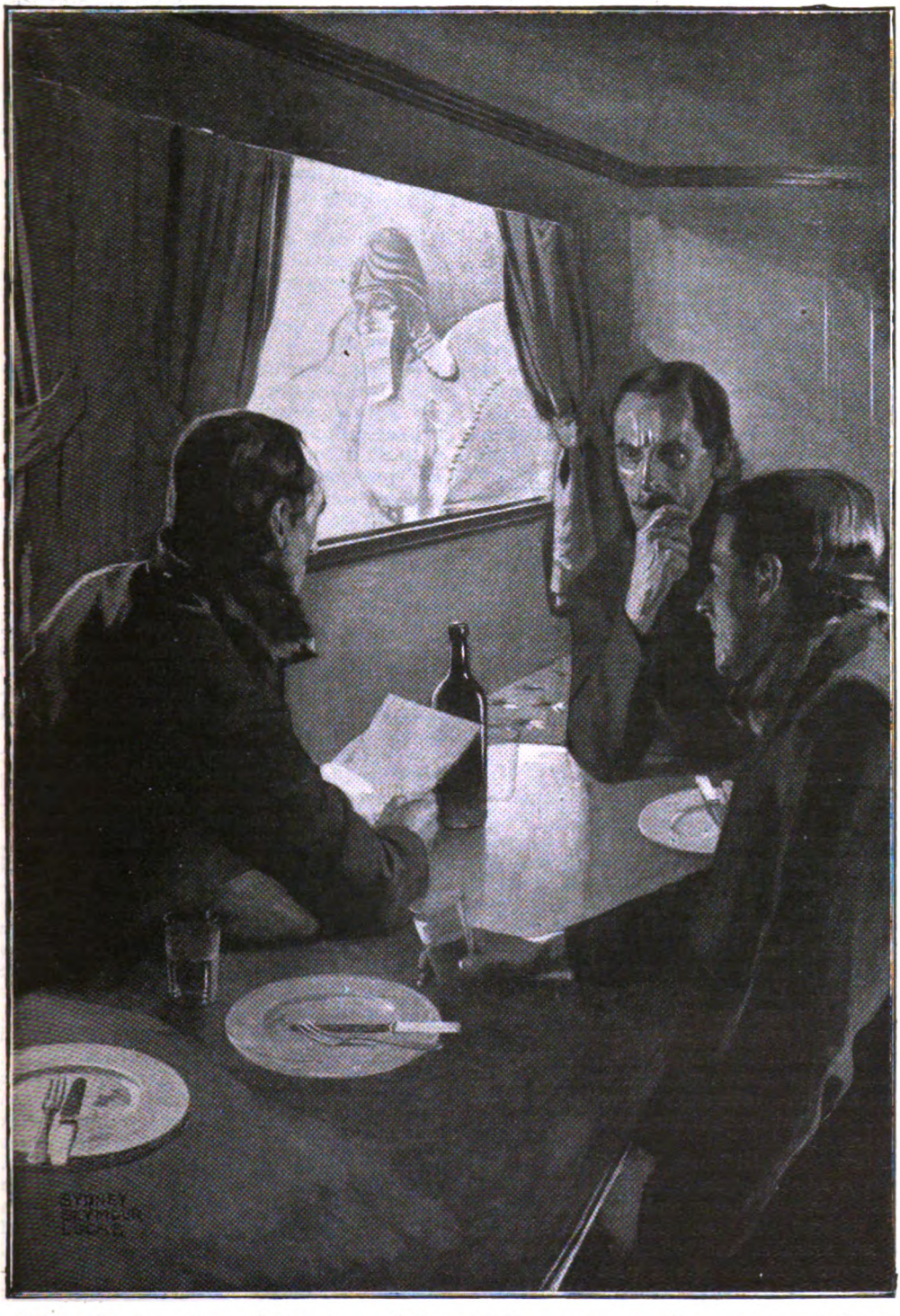
"By all means," said Dicky. "I'm ready as soon as you are. I propose that we start first with the tomb that's already opened." He hesitated a moment, as though half-ashamed of what was in his mind. "By the way, Major—have you got the copy of that inscription on you?" His attempt at a casual voice was not very successful.

I looked at him, reproof in my eyes. But he was not to be diverted.

"Let me have a look at it, will you?" he said.

I could not very well refuse. I took from my pocket the sheet of paper on which I had jotted down my memory of McPherson's reading of that ominous inscription, and handed it to him.

"I, Sarchon, King of Kings, son of Nimrot, King of Kings, lying in this tomb, say: 'Come not to open this tomb. He who shall remove the stone that covers me shall die and in the grave find not repose, neither shall the sun shine upon him nor his kindred know his fate.'" The threat as he read it out, calm though was his voice, sounded peculiarly awesome in the presence of those ineffably placid stone monsters visible through the windows of the saloon. Their very silence seemed eloquent. Dicky looked up from the paper.



"The threat, as he read it out, sounded peculiarly awesome in the presence of those ineffably placid stone monsters visible through the windows of the aeroplane's saloon."

"Do you think, Major, that—just supposing, for example, there were anything in this—I don't say for a moment there is—but just supposing—do you think that the curse is fulfilled so far as the first tomb is concerned? I've been thinking about that skeleton under the slab. If that poor devil paid the penalty—it only says 'uncovering the tomb,' you know—then we ought to be pretty safe in taking the treasure from it. What do you think? We might find so much there that we should not want to disturb the others."

"Shut up, Dicky!" said Jefferson. "You are giving me the creeps."

He was giving me the creeps, too. This kind of talk had to be stopped at once. A solitude such as was so profound about us was not the place to indulge in fanciful speculations.

"By all means let us clear the opened tomb first," I said, with a happy achievement of cool imperturbability. "But I should like to get one of the others open before nightfall. This ledge is apparently not a very safe place for the machine and we do not want to stay a moment longer than is necessary. If a wind-storm sprang up while we are here, it would be extremely awkward, to say the least of it. The cool air from the mountains sometimes blows with hurricane force in its rush to fill the place of the heated atmosphere of the desert-plains, you know." I was determined to be ready with a rational explanation of everything that did or might happen.

Jefferson sprang up from his seat.

"Let's get to work, Major! Come on, Dicky! I bet you I get in first with a chunk of rock at any old ghost that shows himself—loser pays for a dinner at the Savoy when we get back!" He laughed in youthful high spirits. "Come on, you fellows! This way to the pirate's hoard! Where are the old money-boxes?"

I was grateful to him for his boisterous jocularity. Dicky actually smiled as we both rose from the table. A few minutes later, the aeroplane firmly secured behind us, we were on our way to the cave, carrying between us two ammunition-chests with rope-handles—Jefferson's "money-boxes"—which we had brought for the conveyance of the treasure.

After our good lunch, fortified as it had been by a bottle of the best, the dark entrance to the cave no longer looked so forbidding. We ignored the great human-headed bulls as we marched in, Jefferson chanting, in humorous defiance of our past fancies, the refrain of Stevenson's "Treasure Island":—

> "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest,
> Drink and the devil had done for the rest.
> Yo-ho-ho! for a bottle of rum!

This way to the pirate's hoard, my hearties! Personally-conducted tours under the guidance of expert British officers! Inclusive terms, authentic skeletons provided! Everybody free to help themselves. You pays your money and you takes your choice! Yo-ho-ho! for a bottle of rum! This way to the pirate's treasure!"

Franks interrupted his comrade's serio-comic declamation.

"Shut up, Harry!" he said, irritably. "Don't make a jest of it! After all——" He did not finish his thought. I knew he had our treasure-hunting predecessor in his mind.

That long weird moan came again from the interior of the cave. We ignored it resolutely, switching on our flash-lamps as we advanced into the chill gloom.

"Very clever the way those old fellows arranged the acoustics of this place," I said, with an affectation of indifference not quite in correspondence with my feelings. "Did you notice that puff of wind?" I told myself that I shuddered only at the cold of this sunless place.

"Wind, was it?" said Franks, in a strange voice.

WE went on in silence until we reached the first tomb. There, just as the two lads had described it, was the slab aslant from it to the ground—and underneath it that fleshless skeleton with the iron bar by his side.

We gave but a cursory glance either to that luckless relic or to the undoubtedly interesting carvings upon the exterior of the sarcophagus. The glamour of its imagined contents, now after so long journeying almost at our touch, dazzled us to all but instant possession. I understand now that madness of the gold-lust of which I have read in tales of the early diggings. I think we would then and there have killed anyone who stood between us and the treasure. I was startled at the expression of my comrades' faces as I saw them in the circle of light from my torch. They were no longer boys. Fever glittered in their eyes. They looked like old men, lean and covetous. The metamorphosis shocked me in the instant of attention which I gave to it. Without a word, but with a concentrated intensity of action, the three of us clambered up the pedestal of the tomb. The long dreary moan reiterated from the black interior of the cave fell this time upon deaf or heedless ears. An apparition itself would have been unnoticed in our excitement.

We switched our torches into the sarcophagus. The uneasy fear at the back of our minds, which none of us had dared to express, was instantly dispelled. The light was reflected in a dull glint from the metallic bed

on which reposed a few crumbled fragments of bones and cerecloths. The treasure was still there! Two only of the close-packed bricks of gold were missing.

"Hooray!" shouted Jefferson, his voice reverberating uncannily under the vault of the cave. "The old gentleman has saved it for us! Now, my hearties!" He reached down an eager hand, pulled up a brick. "Once aboard the lugger and the treasure's ours!"

"One of us had better get down and pack it into the boxes," I said. "The other two will hand the stuff down to him."

"I'll pack it," responded Franks, obviously keeping himself under stern control. I noticed that he looked up apprehensively as once more that sinister moan seemed to breathe past our ears. He sprang down to the floor of the cave, took the golden bars we passed to him, packed them neatly into the boxes.

We all worked silently, but with a curious instinctive haste, as though we were menaced by interruption. Nothing stirred, however, not even a resting bat, in that cave lost among the mountain solitudes. Our vague fears dropped from us as we worked without any interference, visible or invisible. Jefferson even began to whistle.

The two boxes filled, the three of us—Dicky, as the strongest, in the middle—staggered with them back to the aeroplane. Their weight was surprising. Everything was perfectly normal as we returned to the machine. She had not shifted in the least.

We climbed on board and stowed away the chests in the cargo-hold. As we leaped down again, with two empty ones for the next load, I noticed that the sun was already sinking behind the higher crests of the chaos of mountains around us.

"We sha'n't do more than clear this tomb before nightfall," I said, rather anxiously. "And we shall have to hurry to do that." I did not relish the prospect of passing two nights on this dangerous ledge.

We hastened back to the cave and worked with a will. Journey after journey we made, heavy laden, to the aeroplane. Layer after layer of gold bricks was exposed and packed away in the chests. There was more of it than we expected. Instead of five layers there were seven. (I might have guessed that they would be in a sacred number.) It was already pitch-black night when, utterly wearied, we staggered with the last load to our now familiar home. The light left shining through its saloon-windows welcomed us with a pleasant suggestion of comfort and security. Those last trips in the gathering darkness had been decidedly eerie.

We were all in the best of spirits, however, as we sat round our evening meal in the saloon and toasted our good luck with another bottle. The three of us went to gloat over the stack of treasure-chests in the baggage-hold between the wings. Jefferson, characteristically, expressed a doubt whether the space would contain the spoil to be obtained from the other tombs.

"We'll tuck it away somewhere, never fear!" I said, cheerfully. "We'll start work at dawn to-morrow and get clear away before dark! My lads," I added, turning to them, "do you quite realize how rich we are? It seems fantastic to me."

"To me too," agreed Franks, seriously. "We won't talk about it till we get it safely home. And, by the way, I'll have another look at those tethering-ropes. This would be a nasty spot if it came on to blow during the night."

So saying, he jumped out into the darkness. In a few minutes he returned, quite reassured.

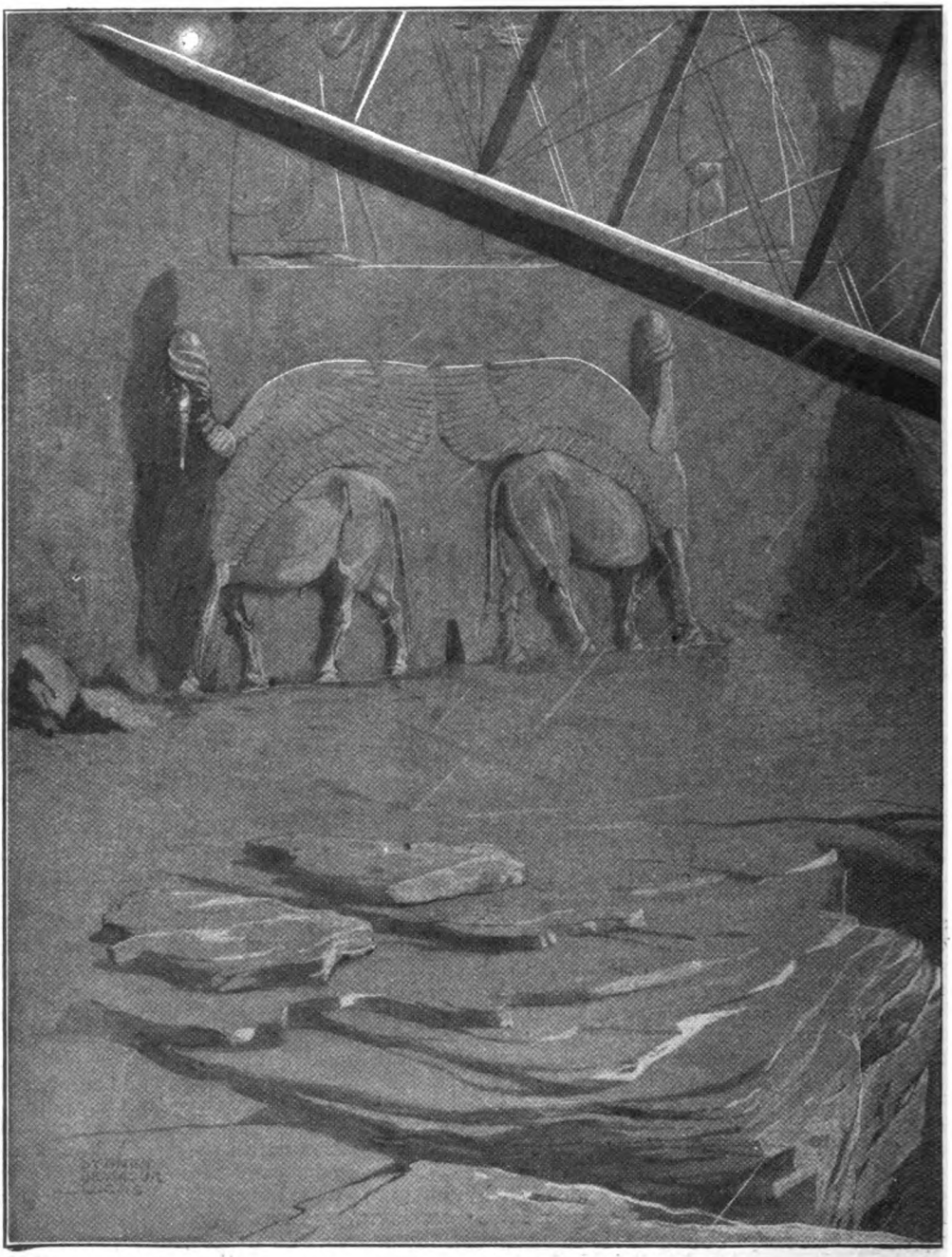
"Nothing short of a gale can shift us," he said. "But I'm going to switch on the headlights all the same. An accident in the dark would be no joke."

He went forward and a moment later the terrace was suffused with a reflected radiance from where the two great circles illumined the stiff placidity of those grotesque monsters carved upon the cliff.

We all turned in to our berths, thoroughly exhausted, and in a few minutes were all asleep.

HOW long I slept I do not know. I was awakened from a confused nightmare of affrighting Assyrian figures that pelted me with gold as I sat in the dining-room of the Savoy Hotel and filled the air with a rushing tumult in which the cream-and-gold pillars of that firmly-established hostelry swayed and rocked as though in an earthquake. It seemed to me that the entire hotel was slipping, slipping, slipping, with an awful grating noise, into a bottomless gulf that had opened for its reception. My consciousness struggled through the welter of dream-phantasms that overlaid it, came to full perception with a shock of wild alarm.

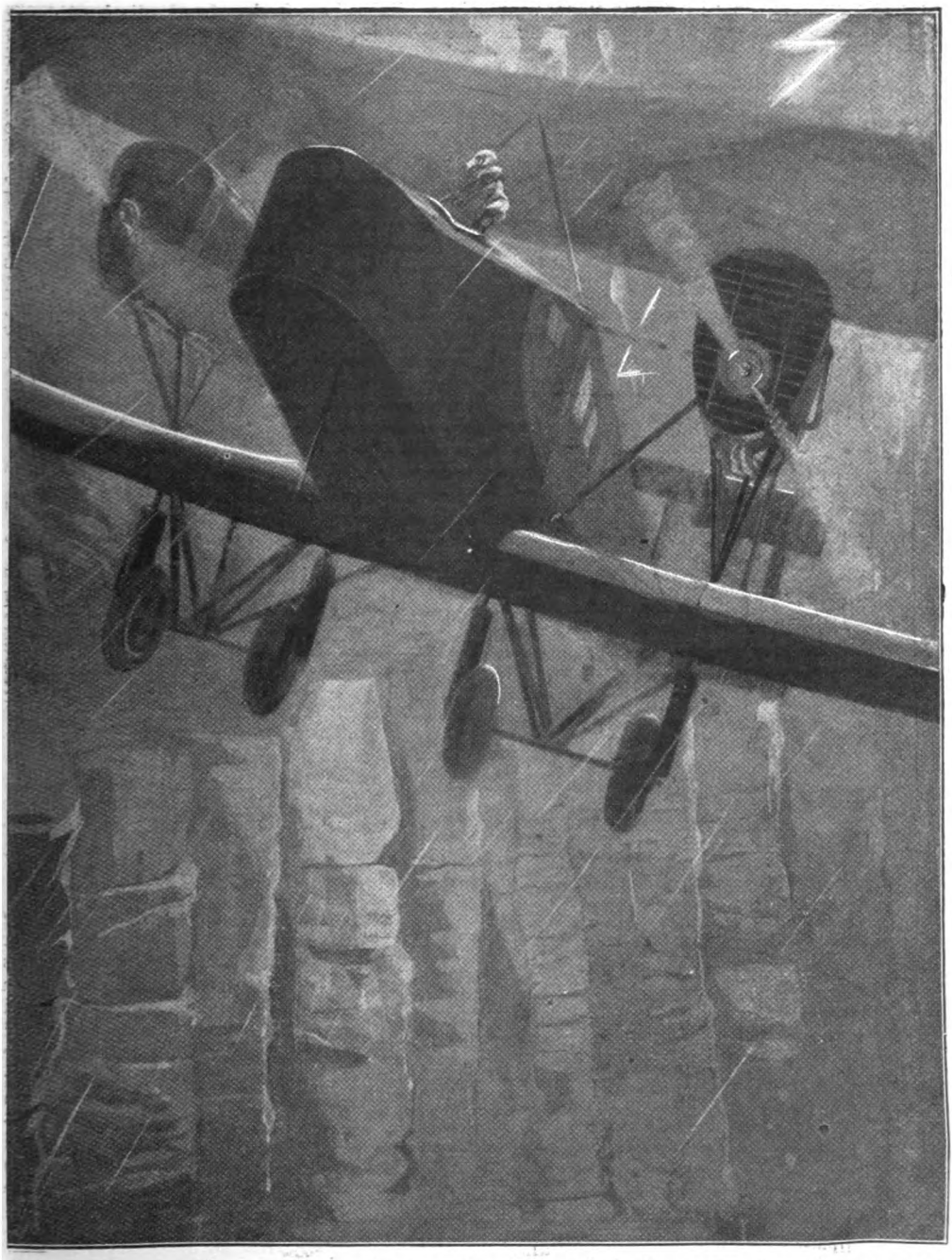
The aeroplane was lifting, slipping, bumping, now pulled up short by a rope, now jerking away in a sudden release, rising and falling from side to side, in a gale of wind that howled among the mountains with the fury of a hurricane. Torrents of rain hammered and drummed upon the canvas roof overhead. Through the saloon windows I had a sudden glimpse of that sculptured rock-face illumined in a blinding jag of lightning. An appalling crash of thunder drowned my voice as I shouted to my companions.



"Then ensued a desperate battle for life. The wind assailed the aeroplane with a frenzy of this pit among the mountains into the

But they were awake. The saloon started into illumination as Jefferson, springing to his feet, switched on the lights. Franks was making for the door to the pilot-compartment, lurching as he went as though in the cabin of a tempest-tossed yacht at moorings.

"We shall be adrift in a moment!" I heard him shout as he disappeared through the door. I guessed his purpose instantly. He was going to start the engines.



of sledge-hammer blows. The engines raved and roared as they strove to pull us up out **rock-free regions of the upper air."**

Another moment and, with a sharp crack in the midst of that tumult of wind and rain and thunder-coupled lightning, the last rope parted. The machine lifted on her beam. I heard her wing scraping along the terrace as we slid. Instinctively I clutched for support, vain though it was, at a stanchion of my bunk. In another instant we should be over the precipice.

Even as I agonized for the cessation of the

scraping sound, I heard the welcome roar of the engines starting into life. Good old Franks! I could imagine him, desperately battling, at the controls. My relief lasted not a second—with a sickening suddenness we dropped, backwards, in an awful vertical descent. The machine swayed violently as she tried to right herself. The engines re-echoed thunderously from the black gulf I glimpsed through the windows, leaped to spasms of their fullest power, yet futile, I was only too conscious, in the fury of that hurricane.

Then ensued a desperate battle for life. It was useless to think of rejoining Franks at the pilot-wheel; I could have been of no assistance even had it been possible. As it was, I had to cling for dear life to prevent myself being thrown through the canvas roof. But Jefferson had vanished, had managed somehow to go to the help of his comrade. I was alone in that saloon which lurched and twirled, bumped and pitched and rolled, fell and rose again at every variety of angle. The wind assailed her with a frenzy of sledge-hammer blows. I wondered how long she could hold together. The headlights were still on. Through the windows I could see them now making white circles on the rock-face, now shooting their beams endlessly, without a target, into the infinite blackness of the night. The engines raved and roared as, struggling with the brutal buffetings of the gale, they strove to pull us up out of this pit among the mountains into the rock-free regions of the upper air.

There was perhaps a minute of suspense, and then the disaster for which I held my breath happened with a vicious suddenness. Caught in a terrific blast of wind that whirled against the precipice, the machine was flung right over, upside down. A hail of small loose objects in the cabin leaped up about my head as, clinging desperately to the support wrenching in my hand, I felt my feet break through the roof. Simultaneously, I heard a clatter and a crash, loud above the uproar of the gale. The boxes of gold—loose amidships in their compartment—had smashed through the roof on to which they had been flung! As I realized it—visualized our hard-won treasure hurtling into the black gulf below—I had a last glimpse, upside down though I was, of the entrance to the cave, its winged guardians vividly illumined in a lightning flash of peculiarly intense brilliancy.

It was perhaps imagination, but I thought I heard a scream of unearthly triumph mingling with the wild howling of the wind. No theory of cunning acoustics was plausible just then.

But I had no mind, in that dreadful crisis, to bemoan the loss of our treasure. At any moment our lives might be extinguished. Hope of survival was a mockery I did not entertain for an instant. Yet the engines still roared against the fury of the gale and still we kept, despite our inverted position, a purchase on the air. Rocking violently from side to side, the miracle happened. A sudden dive nose-down and we returned, in a sickening swoop, to right-side up. I extricated my legs from the torn canvas of the roof, dropped them to the floor. I had a mental glimpse, warm with gratitude, of Franks dauntlessly sticking to his controls, fighting with every ounce of his strength and amazing skill. "Good lad!" I shouted, though I knew he could not hear.

A moment later and we were dashed violently against the face of the rock. I heard the planes on one side crack and break. It was all over! The next instant we were descending in long circling sweeps at an acute angle. The engines still roared intermittently. I looked, following the beams of our downward headlights, into a bottomless gulf whose walls rushed round giddily in our spiral fall. I saw suddenly great boulders directly beneath us, expanding like bladders in quick inflation. Our nose came up suddenly—sideways. There was a terrific shock—blackness.

IT was three weary, tattered, half-starving men—shaken still with the miracle of their escape—who dragged themselves four days later into Mosul. They left behind them, in that gloomy valley, not only a wrecked aeroplane but those golden bars which had rained down from a night of fury into some unknown gulf. As they had picked themselves up, bruised and battered, in the dawn slowly brightening to their returning consciousness, and groped for a way out again to the haunts of men, they had not dared to look up to that terrace where, inaccessible to the boldest mountaineer, those carven winged monsters guarded the treasure of the tombs.

The Strike-Breaker

by A·S·M·HUTCHINSON

ILLUSTRATED BY HAROLD COPPING

ON a day in 1890, and in the afternoon of that day, there took place in Tidborough events which, put together, make a tellable story, though a story outraging all the best and oldest-established literary conventions, and therefore to be avoided by sentimental readers.

At five minutes past four on this afternoon the express from London was awaited at Tidborough station by a great crowd of the kind that is called "an ugly crowd." Ugly to the eye, it was composed of males and females of all ages. The men wore cloth caps and rough clothes and had scarves about their necks; the women were mostly hatless, and they had among the lot of them not so much "finery" as would have decorated (according to their ideas of decoration) the person of a single one of their number. This was because the whole of the combined walking-out trousseaux of the female hands of Bassett's Paper Mills, together with the Sunday clothes of the men, was in the care of the Tidborough pawnbrokers.

Ugly to the eye, the crowd that awaited the oncoming London train was also ugly to the perceptions. It had a sullen, a sinister, and a threatening air. It emitted, as it shifted and swayed beneath its own pressure, a hostile and a deep murmuring that swelled up to the station roof and reverberated there rather like the muttering of distant thunder. A fortnight, or even a week, before, this crowd, similarly assembled, would have temporized the violent strength that manifestly lay within it by coarse chaff and banter and by cheery hailings, one to another. But not now. Bassett's strikers were past that stage. They were hungry. At the outset of the strike they had been noisy. They paraded the streets and sang songs; and, touching the subject of food, they made jokes with one another about "tightening your belt up a couple of holes." Now they were no longer noisy. They stood silently about the bakers' shops and the bakers wore a worried look, and after closing-hours paid visits to the police station.

The strikers had been genial, then jovial, then irritable, then angry. They were now ferocious, and the immediate object of their ferocity was approaching them, assembled at the station, in the 4.5 p.m. from London. Tug Sanders, the strike-breaker.

Strike-breaking by the importation of workers from another district has been known in America. It has never been successfully established in England, and the notion of Mr. Tug Sanders that it could be done, and that he was the man to do it, had been confined, thus far, to his own statements in that section of the London and provincial Press which opened its columns to the possibilities of this factor in the problem of labour unrest, just then engaging considerable attention. Mr. Sanders, reading of the prolonged strike at Bassett's Paper Mills, Tidborough, had communicated with Mr. Henry Bassett. Henry Bassett, stubborn, determined, constitutionally impervious to any other reasoning than his own, an embittered man, a lonely man, a man with a grudge against all men, proud to his marrow and hard to the bone,

knowing public opinion in Tidborough unanimously against him and steeled by that knowledge to bash public opinion across the face and humiliate it to the dust, had replied to Mr. Tug Sanders's communication. Mr. Sanders had triumphantly announced to the Press that he was "proceeding to Tidborough with a view to arranging to break the strike at Bassett's Paper Mills"; and the *employés* of Bassett's Paper Mills were now assembled at Tidborough station with a view to breaking the adjectived neck and adjectived head of Mr. adjectived Sanders, and then to kick the adjectived remains of his adjectived carcass across the adjectived market-place.

Here she comes!

Immediately the great press upon the platform convulsed in enormous upheavals, tossings, and surgings. Rushes from behind on the part of those who would get better placed for the business in hand were frantically battled by those at the front who found themselves driven perilously upon the edge. A man, and then another, and then a shrieking woman, were toppled over on to the line. With panic's true fatuity, they desperately sought return instead of passing across to safety, and frantically were grabbed and pulled and hauled. Oaths flew and savage blows were exchanged.

"Don't push, yer blamed idiot! Can't yer see what——"

"All right, all right. What's up with yer? Take that, then!"

"An' that one for you!"

Into this stupendous uproar the 4.5, and at once cessation of the private brawls; at once a common rush, shouting, fist-tossing, upon the doors and windows of the coaches. Curious passengers sought to protrude inquiring heads, but hastily withdrew them in wise alarm. That savage tumult was a good thing to keep out of.

The threatening, sweaty faces pressed against the windows and surged along them.

"Where is he?"

"Throw him out! Throw him out!"

"We want Tug Sanders!"

And then in a sudden moment, with the quick and mysterious unanimity that gives universal instruction to a mob, there was taken up by every voice a crashing chant:—

"We want Tug Sanders!"

"We want Tug Sanders!"

Feet were accommodated to the rhythm. While those in front pursued their eager quest, wrenching open doors and shouting their ferocious inquiry among shrinking passengers, the crowded masses behind trod out the measure with hobnailed boots crashing in unison with vibrant throats.

"We—want—Tug—Sanders!"

"We—want—Tug—Sanders!"

It was rather horribly frightening to hear.

Mr. Tug Sanders heard it, and it urged him nimbly on his way. To its crashing resonance the famous strike-breaker skipped out of the train on the farther side, was urgently occupied in cautiously, and withal swiftly, putting sweet distance between himself and those so anxiously awaiting him. Always a busy man, the great breaker of strikes had never been so busy. Notoriously a hustler, he had never more briskly kept moving. He had been warned, and he had arrived alert to pay behest to the warning. At the junction forty miles up the line there had been handed to him a telegram from the Tidborough superintendent of police:—

"Very hostile crowd assembled at station. You are advised to leave train by up-side door."

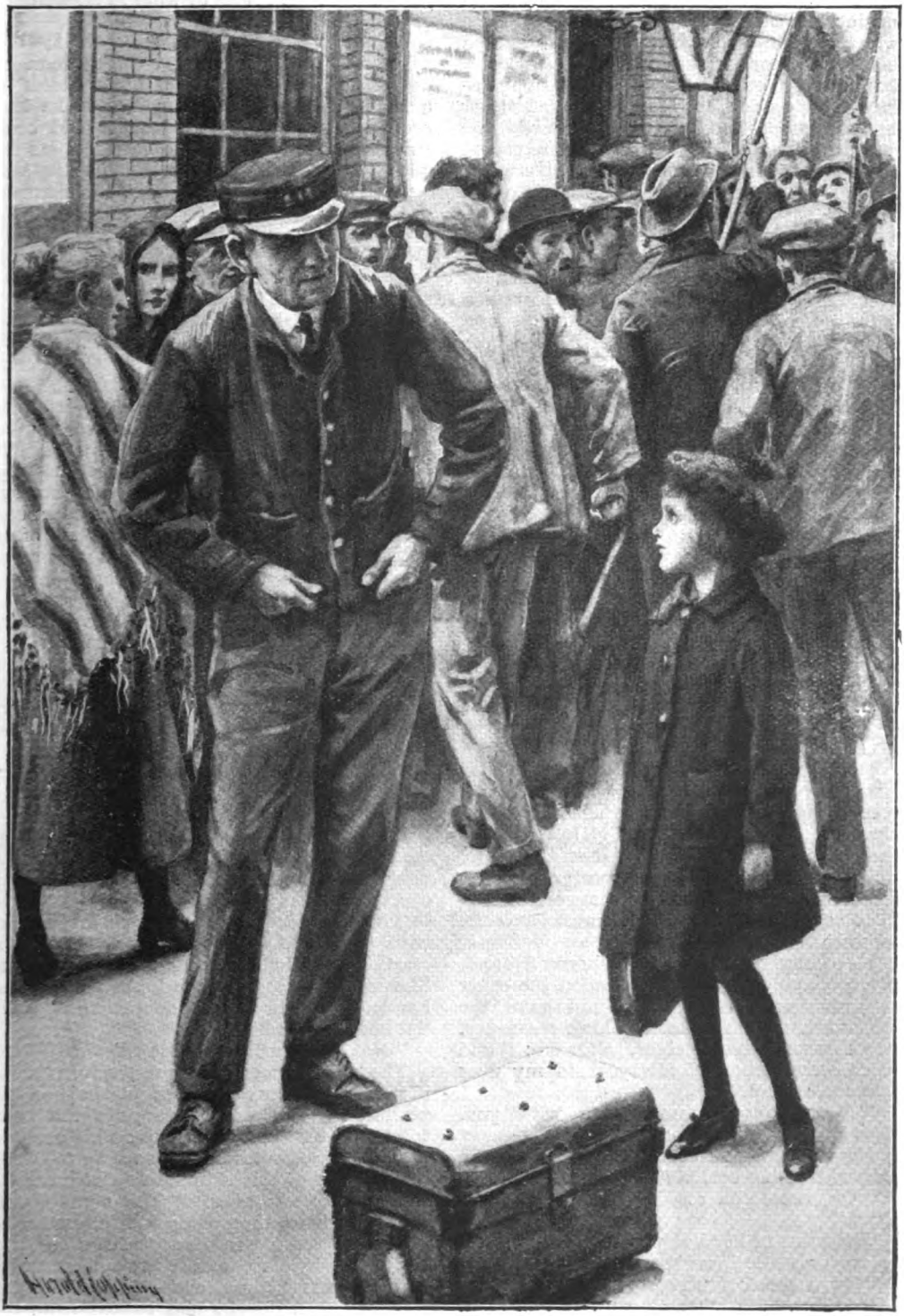
One glimpse as the train drew into Tidborough had been quite enough for Mr. Sanders, a man of notably quick perceptions. The 4.5 was not come to a complete stop before the eminent strike-breaker was nimbly out of the farther door of his compartment and fleeting across the rails in purposeful testimony to the grand natural law of self-preservation.

Safety first!

THE 4.5 drew out. Very quickly the platform cleared. Disappointed of its prey, returned to the hard facts of the lock-out, the mob took counsel with itself, and presently announced its judgment in loud shouts of "To the Old Man's! To the Old Man's!"

At six o'clock the Old Man—Mr. Bassett—was to receive a deputation. Any hopes concerning it had been shattered when it became known that he would first receive the famous strike-breaker. Rumour now quickly spread the report that Tug Sanders had arrived, given them the slip, and doubtless was well on his way to Mr. Bassett's. It commended itself to the strikers to assemble about the Old Man's gates and hear the result straight from the deputation immediately its members left the presence; they shambled into some kind of marching formation and moved along, slouching, silent, downcast, dangerous.

Upon the station platform meanwhile there had been reproduced the best-known fable of Phaedrus. "A mountain was in labour, sending forth dreadful groans, and there was in the region the highest expectation. After all it brought forth an absurd mouse." The 4.5, when it drew out, instead of leaving upon the platform the colossal personality expected of it, grotesquely deposited only the tiny figure of a little girl. Her hair was bobbed—a fashion highly uncommon in 1890—her face was pale, her eyes large. She had a little tin box and she carried a large satchel; and she stood



"The little girl said, primly: 'Good afternoon, porter. If you please, I want a hansom cab.'"

there, looking extraordinarily tiny and quaint, till a porter, detaching himself from watching the departing strikers, observed her and came towards her. This porter knew nothing of Latin tags relative to a mountain bringing forth a mouse—he had never been to school—but it struck him as odd, the mighty personage that had been expected and the tiny little object that had been left, and he rather grinned as he advanced to her.

"Now, then, missy, what's for you?"

The little girl said, primly, "Good afternoon, porter. If you please, I want a hansom cab." And she added, as if she apprehended a thought in his mind, "You must understand I am quite accustomed to hansom cabs, and allowed to go in them, because I come from London. There are simply millions of hansom cabs in London, you know."

The porter, being entirely unaccustomed to children, was able to treat them just as they like being treated. "That so?" he said, seriously.

"Oh, millions. Have you ever been to London?"

The porter had not had this advantage.

"You ought to ask the station-master to let you go one day. It's a most wonderful place, you know. My dear Aunt Victoria says the city of London is the hubbub of the Empire."

"That so?" said the porter.

The little girl nodded in vigorous confirmation. "And it *is* noisy."

SHE was in stature scarcely at the level of the porter's waist, but in her singular self-possession and primness she was completely the dominant partner in these exchanges; and she now, by a glance towards the exits and a gesture of her shoulders, quite clearly instructed the porter that the requirements of polite interchange were fulfilled and that his duties must now be attended.

He swung up her box in one horny fist and, again obeying a gesture, extended the other towards her. She took it and gave the explanation she seemed to think necessary.

"You see, I'm only eight," she said; "and in railway stations I always hold my dear mamma's hand."

"Ain't your mamma come with you, then?" inquired the porter.

Her reply caused him to look sharply down at her, trotting by his side.

"Oh, no. You see, my dear mamma is dead."

The brim of her hat permitted the porter to see only the lower part of her face. He caught a quick protrusion and withdrawal of her lips. He felt awkward. "Ah, dear, dear!" he said.

"She's with God," said the little girl, and sighed with the sound of wind in a midnight cavern.

"That so?" said the porter.

He felt immediately—he was a man of rather delicate perceptions (for a porter)—that it was an inept remark; but he had been rather taken aback, and it had been jerked out of him on the rebound (as he might have explained it). To cover it, and to get well away from it, he said, in a changed and hearty voice, "And where might you be making to now, missy?"

"I'm going to see my dear Uncle Henry."

"That so?" said the porter; "and what might your uncle's regular name be, missy?"

The little girl replied, rather as if she had learnt it by heart: "My dear Uncle Henry is Henry Bassett, Esquire, the Old Court House, near Penny Green, Tidborough."

The porter whistled. The thing—the coincidence—was so completely astounding to him that he had no words to suit it. He felt dazed, and in dazed silence he led the way into the station yard. Three or four hansom cabs were in waiting. He hailed one, and as it came jingling up (the little girl watching it with an ecstatic air of much-approving proprietorship) prepared to hand on his amazement to its driver.

He swung up her box, the driver stiffly reaching tightly-overcoated arms for it: "Wherever don't you think this fare's bound for?"

The driver, who was no public speaker, vouchsafed only the surly grunt of one to whom the vagaries of fares were as nothing. But for the porter's reply he clearly was not prepared.

"Old Bassett's," said the porter.

The driver jerked up his head. "Not on your life?" He had a very deep, suspicious voice and a very small, beery, and suspicious eye. "Not on your life she ain't?"

"Ask of her then," affirmed the porter, with the pride of one that has released a startler. He looked towards the little girl. She was standing by the horse's head, her hands clasped in ecstatic adoration. "Calls 'im her dear Uncle Henry."

"Not on your life she don't."

The porter nodded impressively. "Said it to me with her own lips right there on the platform." He pointed towards the platform, and the driver stood up on his box and looked earnestly towards it as if to see what explanation of this astounding circumstance it might have to offer. "There was they," said the porter, thoroughly well pleased with himself, "there was they waiting for this yer strike-breaker, and there's the strike-breaker as has come, and——" He broke off, for the little girl had turned from the horse and was approaching him, her fingers in her purse.

" Thank you, porter," she addressed him. " That's very nice. Here is threepence for you. Just lift me up to the step, will you ? And in case, porter, any of the four-wheelers are annoyed I took a hansom, just tell them, please, it's because I like to watch the horse." She was on the footboard of the cab, and she caught the driver's small and suspicious eye astoundingly regarding her over the roof; but with the air of one doing the correct thing, she ignored his eye and gave her instructions to the porter. " I'll tell the man where to go to from inside."

" I've told him, missy," said the porter.

She was working herself on to the seat, sitting on her legs tucked beneath her. She said, reprovingly, " But I still will, if you don't mind. My dear mamma always tells him from the inside when he looks through the little hole in the top."

" That so ? " said the porter, and stepped back and stared upon the driver with eyes that asked, " Did you ever ? "

A yellow eye now gazed lambently down upon the little girl through the roof-trap. She addressed it. " If you please, I am going to my dear Uncle Henry. If you please, to Henry Bassett, Esquire, the Old Court House, near Penny Green, Tidborough. What's your horse's name ? "

The eyes of the porter on the pavement said : " Ah, now it's your turn ! " The yellow eye of the driver, raised in astonishment from the trap, gazed first upon his horse, then upon the porter, and then inside his hat, lifted for that purpose as though with some expectation of finding the horse's name there written. A great difficulty faced the driver, and it was that the only name by which he ever called his horse was " Blast yer " : " Get up, blast yer ! Now then, blast yer ! Whoa, blast yer ! "

He was, however, though a slowish man, a man of resource. A powerful aroma of beer descended upon the little girl. " What name would you like him to be called, lady ? "

She twisted up her face to the beer vent. " I should *like* him to be called Black Beauty."

" That's what he is called, lady," said the driver, hoarsely.

" Although he's brown ? " said the little girl, quickly.

The driver raised his head and blew an enormous discharge of beery fumes across the top of his cab. " Hoo-oo-oo-ff ! " He gazed despairingly at the porter but saw no sympathy there. He again applied his face to the trap. " 'Is mane's black, lady, *an'* 'is tail."

" So they are ! So they are ! " cried the little girl, and struck her hands together. " Do you mind if I click him off ? "

" Not a bit, lady," said the driver, relieved.

" T'ck ! t'ck ! " clicked the little girl. " Gee up, Black Beauty ! "

THE driver thought hard, though slowly, during the long drive to the Old Court House. He was in violent sympathy with the strikers and entertained a violent opinion of Henry Bassett, and in the fuddled way in which, consequent upon his chief interest in life, the processes of his mind worked, he had a sullen notion that he was playing false to the strikers by permitting a relative of the hated Bassett in his cab. The notion swelled to a head as the cab overtook, passed through, and left the ranks of the marchers. He was cogitating some remarks to the little girl on the subject of her uncle when the roof-trap was agitated from beneath, and he raised it and looked down.

The little girl, who had climbed upright to get at the trap, was resettling herself upon her curled-up legs. " I just wanted to say," she said, " please flick those flies off Black Beauty's ears. Thank you ! You must watch for them, you know. Where were all those men going to ? "

The question was pleasant to the driver. He had the feeling, cumulative upon his attitude towards the strikers, that his horse must be thinking him a fool or gone mad thus finickingly to apply the lash he customarily used with all his arm behind it. He said, with harsh emphasis, " They're going to see your dear uncle."

" *Are* they ? " cried the little girl. " Is it a party ? "

" *Party ?* " growled the driver. " *Party ?* "

" You've been drinking beer, haven't you ? " said the little girl.

" Yes, lady," said the driver, and closed the trap.

THE Old Court House was approached by massive iron gates and a short drive. The front door stood within cavernous portals, in which the little girl, standing before it, looked rather like a fly at the bottom of a large teacup. The driver, descending, rang for her the bell-pull, which depended like a giant's club far above her head, was paid, and drove off (" For the less I sees of these 'ere, lady," said the driver, " the better I feels." " When I'm not feeling very well," said the little girl, " my dear mamma gives me syrup of figs." The driver withdrew himself).

A very tall, thin man, with the appearance of having been baked dry in an oven, opened the door and looked all about him till the little girl coughed, when he looked towards his boots and observed her.

" If you please," said the little girl, " I've come to stay with my dear uncle."

Stupefaction took voice within the tall man. " Come to stay with—— Come

to stay with your dear uncle ? " he repeated.

" Yes, thank you," said the little girl, and stepped over the threshold and began very industriously to wipe her feet on the mat.

The man stared down with the air of one watching an astounding and uncanny phenomenon. " Is it Mr. Bassett you mean ? "

" Excuse my not answering before," said the little girl, after a pause in which her feet continued vigorously at work. " I go nine times with each foot. How many times do you go ? "

" I'm afraid I couldn't quite say as to that," said the tall man. With the porter and the driver, he found himself, as it were, mesmerically overpowered.

The little girl regarded him interestedly. " I suppose it's a habit with you. My dear mamma says that in time it becomes a habit, and then you stop counting. Do you do the backs of your heels like this, or like this ? "

" I'm afraid I couldn't quite say as to that, miss," said the tall man. He cleared his throat. " I was inquiring, miss, if it was Mr. Bassett you meant for your uncle ? "

" Oh, yes," said the little girl. " My dear Uncle Henry. It couldn't be either of my other dear uncles, you see—my dear Uncle Barnabus or my dear Uncle William, because my dear mamma says they're not on speaking terms with my dear Uncle Henry, so they couldn't be here, could they ? "

" I'm afraid I couldn't quite say as to that, miss," said the tall man. " I don't seem to recollect the gentlemen." He made an uncertain motion towards the interior of the hall. " What name might it be, miss ? "

" Lucy," said the little girl. " What's yours ? "

" Cleggs, miss," said the tall man, speaking, like the porter, on the rebound of surprise. He hesitated, but, as the little girl appeared willing to accept this without comment, he drifted uncertainly up the hall and, knocking discreetly, passed through a doorway.

THE proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills sat at a writing-table fingering some papers and looking the man impervious to any reasoning but his own, the solitary and embittered man with a grudge against all men, the man proud to the marrow and hard to the bone, that he was reputed to be and that unquestionably he was. His clean-shaven face was the setting of eyes that were like dull grey stones, hard and cold as such, and that appeared to be lidless, so fixed their gaze, and of a mouth whose lips were tightly pressed together as though he held something upon his tongue.

He looked up and spoke in an austere voice, as of one pronouncing a judgment. " If that's the deputation, Cleggs—— "

Cleggs began, " I beg your pardon, sir, it's—— " and turned at something that was pushing like a dog against his legs.

" I can't quite get past you," said the little girl, in her high, clear voice. " Thank you. Didn't you know I was just behind you when you stopped ? " She advanced to the writing-table. " Are you my dear Uncle Henry ? "

" Who are you ? " demanded Mr. Bassett. He might have been addressing a burglar.

" I'm your little niece, Lucy."

Mr. Bassett set his hands upon the arms of his chair and appeared to constrict them. " Lucy's child ! " He turned his hard glance sharply across the room. " Get out of here," he said to Cleggs. He said to the little girl, very roughly, " What nonsense is this ? Where do you come from ? "

" From London. I've come to stay with you. Have you got something in your mouth ? "

" It will be time for you to ask questions," said Mr. Bassett, " and not rude or stupid questions, when you have answered mine."

" Thank you," said the little girl. " I only asked because you hold your lips pressed up like I hold mine when I have cod-liver oil and can't bear to swallow it. What was your question ? "

" My question was, What nonsense is this ? Where is your mother ? "

The little girl swallowed before she spoke. " My dear Uncle Henry, please don't cry, but be brave. My dear mamma is dead."

The proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills said, " Lucy—dead ! "

" She's with God," said the little girl, and sighed again the tremendous sigh heard by the porter. " I'm not to cry, and I haven't —feel my handkerchief."

The proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills disregarded the invitation. " When did she die ? "

" On Tuesday."

" Who was there ? "

" Only me."

" Where was she buried ? "

" At Kensal Green."

" Who was there ? "

" Only me."

The little girl's lips were swiftly protruded and withdrawn. " I find if I pinch my nose it's a great help," she said. " I think I will."

It was a little pathetic ; but here is where the best literary conventions are outraged in this story. It was a little pathetic ; on the stage or in the best stories a tear would have stolen down Mr. Bassett's grim, cold cheek, and the rest would be damp, excruciating, and easy. It is magnificent, but it is not life.

"He said to the little girl, very roughly: 'Where do you come from?' 'From London. I've come to stay with you!'"

It doesn't really happen. Consider the most curmudgeonly old man you know—your employer or your selfish uncle—and ask yourself if any such news as the death of his one-time favourite sister would immediately cause him to violate the characteristics of a lifetime and soften like a pound of butter in the sun. You know perfectly well that nothing less than a poleaxe would soften him. It was the same here. No tear stole down Mr. Bassett's grim, cold cheek. He did not so much as wince. As a child he had been devotedly attached to his sister Lucy. In youth she had kept house for him. He had quarrelled violently and tyrannically with her; and the hard but thoroughly human fact is that his childhood's affections and the impulses of his youth were screwed and battened down beneath forty years of brass-bound, weather-proofed, steel-enforced, iron-clamped, triple-locked self-interest.

He did not even wince. "Only you?" he said, solidly. "Only you? Your uncles, your aunt, they were in touch with her. Where were they?"

The little girl was still pinching the bridge of her nose. Her raised elbow and the simultaneous twisting of one leg seemed to indicate the necessity, and the exercise, of much force. "If you can see any wetness," she announced, "it's the pinching. My dear Aunt Victoria and my dear uncles said it was most unfortunate for them, but you can't put off a wedding just because anyone is ill; and afterwards my dear aunt came and explained you couldn't put it off for a funeral. It was my dear Cousin Kate's wedding, and my dear Uncle William said it was a most important catch—no, match. Would it be catch or match?"

"Catch, if I know my dear sister Victoria," said Mr. Bassett.

"A most important catch," continued the little girl, "and it would have looked so strange if they weren't there. And my dear Uncle Barnabus said it was most unfortunate being the same day, and——"

"Ah, like them, like them!" interpolated the proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills. "I can see them; I can hear them!"

"*Can* you?" said the little girl, and stood on tiptoe and looked along the line of her uncle's sight.

He laughed.

He laughed and—listen to this—it was his laugh, and no groan, that did actually cause a stir and a creaking of the massy baulks beneath which, like soft green leaves pressed dry and skeletonized in a book, his childhood's generous qualities lay. He laughed. His thought was "What an idea! What a

child! What a thing to be so ingenuously simple as that! Imagine it, if one could be a child like that! Ah me, if one could!"

He laughed, and somewhere deep within him a twinge responded.

All Mr. Bassett said, snapping off the laugh and stifling the twinge, was, "Where were you living? In lodgings?"

The little girl nodded. "In our lodgings, yes. Do you know"—she put a hand on the table in the motion of calling particular attention—"Do you know, our landlady's grown-up daughter was in the pantomime. She was! She was in the fourth row, and our landlady said she would have been in the front row, only she had thin legs on her father's side. Which side of you is your father's side?"

He laughed again, this time a full and free laugh.

"Well, you're all on your mother's side," he said, "if that's any explanation to you." And he ended again, to himself, "Ah me!" not because he was thinking of her mother, for he was not, but because he was thinking of himself. And though pages might be written of what he was thinking of himself, they might, with equal clearness and poignancy (for those who suddenly glimpsed something they have lost), be written just as he expressed it—"Ah me!"

He said to her: "Do you know, when you walked in at that door just now you were about as likely to stay and live here as Cleggs is to stand on his head."

"*Can* he?" cried the little girl, enormously interested.

"You'd better ask him. But suppose you do stay here? What an idea! How could you? There'd be all sorts of difficulties."

The little girl seemed quite to appreciate this. He was frowning over certain of the difficulties, and she reflected his frown. "There'd be my back to wash," she said.

He laughed again. It came quite easily. "Ah, that particular difficulty hadn't occured to me. I dare say we could get over that."

"Well, I can do everything else for myself. It's only my back when I have my bath."

HE was not really thinking of practical difficulties. Practical difficulties never stood in the way of the proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills. That was why he paid super-tax on his income. The difficulties he was thinking of were of the same order as those which torture a man when he knows he ought to get up in the morning, and will be infinitely happier when he does get up, but feels he simply cannot. All very well to have this little girl in the house and to have always this—this freshness, this *newness;* but how about giving up his accustomed mode of life and his accustomed outlook on life and the bearing and the behaviour in life that his fellow-men were accustomed to see in him? Forty years habituated in it. Forty years—ah me! But still——

But he kept up the pretence of practical difficulties. "How about lessons? Don't you have to do lessons?"

"My dear mamma did me my lessons," said the little girl. "I can show you and you can do me them, because, do you know, I've got the very same books that you and my dear mamma used when you were little like me. They've got your marks in them. I've got them here."

She took from a chair the satchel she had brought with her and put it on the table. "There was no room in my box," said the little girl. She pulled out small and battered volumes. "There they are. Do you remember them?"

"I remember them," he said.

The little girl had opened one of the books and was turning over the leaves before him. "Look, those are your marks when you were learning. Your dear mamma used to put the dates every day, and so did mine."

He rather stolidly regarded the thumbed pages, his mother's pencil-marks, the old-fashioned woodcuts, and the little readings in huge print. He was not touched by it all as, on the stage or in the best stories, he would have been touched. What he felt was a strange but unmistakable delight in the funny little old book with its grotesquely pious and moral tales. His sole reading was the *Times* and the *Financial Times*. This stuff was delicious! And once it had thrilled him! "Ah me!"

The little girl thought he must have finished the page at which he was staring. "That was your reading-book," she said. "My dear mamma says you both simply loved it. There was one page—a poetry page—she said you couldn't understand. I'll show you."

She flattened before him a page conspicuously white compared with the finger-stained others: obviously seldom read. It had three stiff woodcuts: a small urchin sporting after a butterfly; a young man walking a path and looking at a bird above him, presumably in song; a middle-aged man seated on a bench in the attitude of reflection.

He remembered the pictures perfectly. His eyes read the verse accompanying them:—

> Shades of the prison-house begin to close
> Upon the growing Boy,
> But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
> He sees it in his joy;

The Youth, who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

It was unfair. The proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills was smitten between the joints of his harness. There must be a hiatus. He is as entitled as any other citizen to suffer his wound unobserved in the privacy of his own room. He was forty years deep in the prison ; forty years from the glory, and forty years from the dream ; and he was in the company of a little girl upon whom no shades of the prison-house had yet descended, which rather intensified and showed up his condition. How, then, would you like, if a similar calamity overtook you, to have your thoughts vulgarly analyzed and hideously exposed in public print ? Why should unfortunate people, butchered into fiction to make a reader's holiday, suffer these things ? Why should the proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills suffer them ? Dash it ! he sha'n't.

The little girl waited an enormously long time for him to speak. Her own thoughts, stoutly kept away by trains, porters, hansom cabs, drivers, and uncles, crowded upon her while she waited.

At last she said, " Do you understand that now, uncle ? "

He said, rather heavily, " I understand it." He turned in his chair towards her. " You're going to stay with me all right. What would you like to do—first ? "

The little girl said, " I'd like—most awfully—to cry."

The proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills extended his hands to her.

She said, " Do you think my dear mamma would mind ? "

The proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills swallowed something. " She'll know I said you might."

The little girl's face began to work with extraordinary convulsions.

He opened his arms to her.

THE little girl sobbed with an abandonment to grief utter, complete, enormous, devastating. Every fibre and particle of her small body seemed to contribute to the abandonment. It was like a universal capitulation of all her parts rushing to the call of one stream as river banks collapse to a flood. Her face was buried in the shoulder of the proprietor of Bassett's Paper Mills. He had never seen anything like such grief. He had never imagined that anything like it could be. Once or twice she cried " My dear mamma ! My dear mamma ! " He put an awkward hand to her head and stroked it and held her rather tight.

And beneath the catastrophic collapse of her emotions he was himself undergoing a huge and monstrous capitulation, a washing out, a surging up from under, that the little twinges when he laughed at her had begun. He was thinking all kinds of things while he held her. He began to suffer the extraordinary feeling that he was not so much holding her as himself holding on to her. He was thinking all kinds of things. The only thing that, in common decency to him, need be reported, was the thought, " This infernal strike ! That's in the way. Infernal thing ! " Also this thought : " It's time I got out of it. Turn it into a company. Getting too old. Don't understand these new ideas about workpeople. Get out of it. Potter about—with this scrap." And again : " This infernal strike ! In the way ! Infernal thing ! "

The violence of her passionate sorrow ran its course. It ebbed away in long heaves and little shudders. He sat her upright on his knee and with a handkerchief wiped her eyes. " Feel better ? Better now, eh ? "

He put the handkerchief in his pocket. " Look here. I expect you'd like to do something for me, wouldn't you ? "

She nodded. She couldn't quite get words yet.

" There're some people waiting here to see me. Cleggs has been in and out of the room while you've been having your cry. I want you just to go in and say something to them for me—will you ? "

She nodded again. Her sniffs would have made a vacuum-cleaner feel jealous. But she brightened very much at the idea of a thing to do. She nodded more vigorously. " Is it the p-party ? "

" You might call it a party." He set her on her feet. " They're in the room straight opposite across the hall. Just go in and say to them from me "—he told her what to say. " Can you remember that ? "

" Oh, yes. It sounds funny to me. Will they understand ? "

" You see ! Well, perhaps—look, if they don't, give them this." He wrote on a slip of paper and handed it to her.

SIX persons awaited the little girl. The strikers' deputation consisted of four men and two women. They were gathered in the great dining-room, and waited with rather sad, anxious eyes fixed on the door. Have you ever seen the eyes of bullocks looking out through the gates of a slaughter-house ? They had been kept waiting a long time and they boded no good from the delay. That strike-breaker !

The handle of the door turned slowly.

"Oh, my God!" said one of the women.

The door, instead of opening very wide to admit the master, opened but a few inches. The little girl slid in through the aperture and turned and stood on tip-toe to put both hands to the handle and shut it again.

The deputation simply stared.

The little girl came up to the anxiously waiting group. "If you please," she said, "my dear uncle says your terms are granted."

The deputation simply stared.

The little girl nodded in a friendly way. "Yes, your terms are granted. That's what my dear uncle told me to tell you."

They were all on their feet.

"Granted!" cried one; and "Granted!" another.

The woman who had made the exclamation as the door-handle began to turn came forward quickly and struck her hands together upon her shrunken bosom before the little girl. "Dearie, you wouldn't deceive—— Dearie, for the love of God——"

"There's this paper," said the little girl, rather surprised, for she had never been to a party like this before.

The paper went to the hands of an old

"The door, instead of opening very wide to admit the master, opened but a few inches. The
says your terms are granted.'

man who had had the centre place in the group. He read it out in a trembling voice.

> Your demands are granted. The works will open in all departments at 6.0 a.m. to-morrow. The new scale will take effect forthwith.
>
> HENRY BASSETT.
>
> N.B.—Furnacemen should attend at 4.0 a.m.

The old man dropped terrifically on his chair and buried his head in his arms.

Someone said, " Praise God ! Praise God ! " The woman facing the little girl dropped on her knees and clasped the little girl terribly to her heart.

little girl slid in and came up to the deputation. 'If you please,' she said, 'my dear uncle The deputation simply stared."

NEW LIGHT ON NAPOLEON

HIS WIFE'S

The Romantic Story of the Manuscript of

THE PRIVATE JOURNAL OF MARIE-LOUISE,

Now First Published.

The history of the following remarkable document must first be told in the words of Lady Thompson, the present possessor of the manuscript :—

"This authentic private Journal of the Empress Marie-Louise was bequeathed to me from my grandmother, Mrs. Smijth Windham, who herself translated, but never published, a considerable portion of it. This, together with my own fragments, has now been edited and the translation completed by Miss Frances A. Welby.

"Mrs. Smijth Windham left the following memorandum in the pocket of the little red volume that has outlived so many vicissitudes:—

> "'In the year 1836 I became acquainted with a Swiss governess called Mlle. Müller, who lived *many years* with Lady Jane Peel. She was very intimate with a governess I had for my children, and I came into the room one day as she was reading these Memoirs to her friend. I stopped to listen and then borrowed the book, which amused us much.
>
> "'Some months after this I *proposed* to her to let me purchase it, and after some hesitation she agreed.
>
> "'All she knew of it was—that her brother, M. Müller, was tutor to one of Marie-Louise's pages—who was in waiting when she escaped from the Tuileries—and he *picked it up from the floor* and gave it to his tutor some time afterwards.
>
> "'The page's name is written in small characters on the first leaf of the book—"Vicompte de ——" *—I forget the name. This is all I know.'

"It must be remembered that in 1810, when she wrote the first diary, Marie-Louise was only eighteen. She was born on December 12, 1791, and was married to the Emperor Napoleon on April 2, 1810. She writes explicitly: 'This book is for myself alone.'"

* The page's name was written in pencil and is now too faint to be deciphered.

HONEYMOON DIARY!

When, in her childhood, Marie-Louise, the eldest daughter of the Emperor of Austria, played with her little sisters and brothers, soldiers were their favourite toys. The ugliest, blackest, and most repulsive of them was christened Bonaparte, who was stuck all over with pins and had maledictions heaped on his wooden head. Indeed, up to the very date of her marriage she had been accustomed to regard him as bearing a strong resemblance to the black-winged demons of the Inferno, pronging the sinners in the lake of boiling pitch. Suddenly, when she was eighteen, she was told that the conqueror of her country, and indeed of half Europe, desired to marry her and that it was her duty to consent. She went to the sacrifice with very much the feelings of a fairy princess who is wooed by an ogre. Napoleon himself described the marriage as "an abyss covered with flowers." How, then, did the event turn out? In her letters, the young wife declared that she was perfectly happy. But she tells a different story in the secrecy of her diary.

"I let him grumble as he liked without answering him. There is nothing that quiets men so much as this. They are insupportable beings, and if ever I were to come back in another world, I would not marry again—most certainly not!"

These are hardly the words of a perfectly happy bride. The fact is that Napoleon, although delighted with his young wife, who, although not actually pretty, was brimming with life and charm, was still something of a domestic tyrant. Indeed, the light thrown upon his character in these pages is something of a revelation throughout.

Such is the document, of unique and historical importance, the most interesting portions of which we have now the pleasure of laying before our readers.

I SET out from Compiègne well content with the notion of such a pleasant journey. My previous travels had all been very sad. I imagined that this expedition would be delightful, and I am sure that I shall love travelling to distraction. The Queen of Naples and the Grand Duke of Wurzbourg accompany us. I am particularly pleased to have the latter with me—he is so kind and so vivacious. I left Compiègne on April 27th, 1810, at nine in the morning. The country between Compiègne and St. Quentin is very pretty, even beautiful, and very fertile. Along the whole of the road one sees little hills covered with fruit trees, now in full bloom, and fields of the most lovely green conceivable, intersected by small streams bordered with willows, and one sees many hamlets and villages, and what struck me most was the quantity of windmills. In every place the Emperor was received by the inhabitants with bells ringing and cannon firing, and expressions of a devotion as simple as it was touching. Everywhere the young ladies presented us with flowers and with poems, most of which were very bad.

We arrived at St. Quentin at midday, and were lodged in the Préfecture, where everything was uncomfortable and dirty—and still more disagreeable was it that I was accommodated more than half a mile away from the Emperor. He took *déjeuner* at once, and got on his horse to visit the fortifications and the commencement of the canal of St. Quentin, which was completed that day, and which had been constructed from a plan given by the Emperor himself. I went to bed, since I was stiff and bruised, not being

Napoleon's second wife, the Empress Marie-Louise.

yet accustomed to continuous travelling over paved roads.

The Emperor made me get up at four o'clock to visit a cotton mill belonging to the Préfet, which is superb; the machines are very fine inventions. On our return we received the authorities. The Emperor conversed with them for over two hours. These audiences are enough to kill one—one is obliged to remain standing all the time. After this the young ladies offered me products from their manufactures.

The Emperor was much amused at telling me of a fall that Chevalier Jouan had. He was riding in the *suite* at a gallop, without looking where he was going, and was caught in the branch of a tree; the horse went on, and after a few minutes he fell to the ground without hurting himself in the least. Unkind gossips say that he believed himself dead for more than an hour, which is very like him.

Next day we left St. Quentin at seven in the morning, and after crossing the whole town, which is not very large, we arrived at the canal, where we found two gondolas ready to receive us. The canal begins at St. Quentin and finishes at Cambrai, where it joins the Scheldt. It is over fifty miles in length, and has twenty-three locks. It is very wide and deep. We embarked and continued on our way beneath a blazing sun, which gave us terrible headaches. When we reached the first tunnel, into which the water had not yet been admitted, we entered carriages in order to pass through. It is over half a mile long, and is entirely cut out of the rock. The vault is very high, and was illuminated by two rows of lamps, which made a magnificent effect. It is a *chef-d'œuvre*, unique of its kind. We continued our journey by carriage as far as the entrance to the second tunnel, where tents had been set up for *déjeuner*, which we welcomed like famished travellers.

We went through this tunnel, which is nearly four miles long, in a boat towed by men, which was not very serviceable, for it let in water to the height of two inches. This wetted our feet, but there was no means of remedying it, and one had to bear up gaily. For me this was not difficult, as I have an iron constitution which nothing injures.

THE DISCOMFORTS EVEN OF ROYAL TRAVELLERS IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

In addition we narrowly escaped capsizing, because the fat Prince Schwarzenberg was continually leaning out of the boat, and his weight threw it all on one side. This second tunnel was lit like the first, and at the end of every hundred *toises* [about six hundred and fifty feet] there was a shaft to let in daylight. After an hour and a half we reached the mouth, and got into the carriages again. We saw the source of the Scheldt, that majestic river which, a hundred miles farther on, is so wide and deep that the largest battleships can enter it—here so narrow that one can easily jump over it with both feet together. It passes twice under the canal, which is carried over it by means of a bridge—this is so narrow that we were obliged to get out of the carriages and have them lifted over by men. This proceeding delayed us more than an hour, and put the Queen of Naples into such a bad temper that one could not speak to her for the rest of the day. I cannot understand how people in travelling can complain and get impatient over such venial accidents. I, indeed, found them very trifling in comparison with all that I had to put up with in my other journeys, and of which I have never complained.

We embarked again about a mile from Cambrai, and at half-past three we entered the basin which terminates the canal. On reaching the Hôtel de Ville I went to bed—the sun had given me a shocking headache. I was, however, quite pleased with myself in that I had not complained once during the journey—it is true that the ill-humour of several of the ladies was sufficient to disgust me with it.

The Queen of Naples left us at Cambrai, and with her Chevalier de Metternich—so much the better. I do not regret them, but it was very ungallant of the Grand Duke of Wurzbourg to desert us to follow the Queen of Naples. It is only too true that when love and friendship are in the balance poor tender friendship must always be undermost.

We only reached Brussels in the evening, and although it appeared to be a very fine, large town, I could not judge of it well, for we passed through it hurriedly.

The country becomes still more beautiful between Brussels and Laeken. The Brussels Canal is surrounded by lines of magnificent trees, which are backed by country houses and charming gardens. At the end of an hour we climbed a steepish hill, and arrived at Laeken. This is a fine enough palace which the Emperor bought from the Duke of Saxe Reschen.

On our arrival the Emperor went at once to see the château. There are two vastly fine apartments on the ground floor, which is raised by a dozen steps from the garden. There are also a number of rooms on the *entresol* and on the first floor.

MARIE-LOUISE AND THE DOCTOR.

I immediately took a bath to rid myself of the horrible dust. I do not know if the bath upset me because I got into it while I was very hot, but I was seized with frightful

cramp in the stomach and colic. The Emperor must needs send for Chevalier Jouan, who arrived and, after many florid and pompous phrases, informed the Emperor that I was in a delicate condition and might be taken ill if I continued my journey. The Emperor believed it, which annoyed me so much that I suffered still more.

To revenge myself on Chevalier Jouan I pretended to be very ill. He hurried in, felt my pulse, declared that he could not find it, and rubbed my nose with vinegar.

Happily, after five minutes I wished to return to life, for he was already talking of bleeding me.

This little incident left me with a very strange opinion of him, for it could only be ignorance or the wiles of a clever courtier which made him act like that. I prefer to think it is the first. I should despise him too much if it were the second. It is, however, true that we are living in such a delightful world that I must accustom myself to it. I fear, indeed, that this will be very difficult.

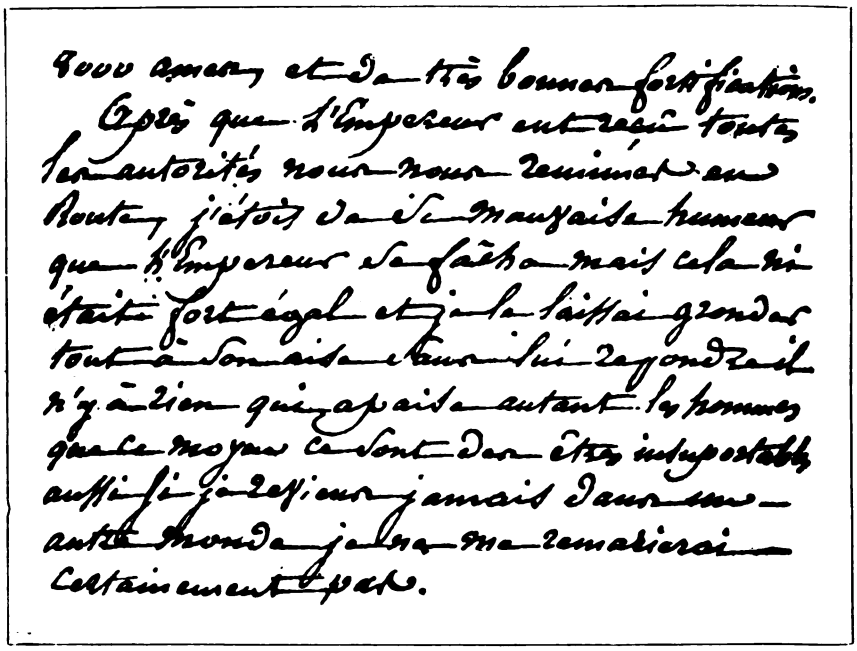
The next day, April 30th, the Emperor, instead of letting me rest, awakened me at seven in the morning to go and see the garden. Fortunately, in his sleep he had forgotten Chr. Jouan's fine phrases, and there was no further question of leaving me at Brussels.

After the Emperor had received the deputations and we had taken *déjeuner*, we set off across the garden at the extremity of which is the canal on which we were to embark. Here we were rejoined by the Viceroy and the King and Queen of Westphalia, who had arrived from Paris to accompany us on the journey.

We went through four locks, at each of which we were delayed at least twenty-five minutes. There is nothing more tiresome than a canal voyage—it takes an hour to travel about two miles.

At Malines we began to see many trading vessels—they are large enough to undertake the voyage to the Indies. Never have I been so much entertained as during this day, when everything was a novelty to me. I had never seen any ships, so it was impossible to make either the Queen of Westphalia or myself take part in the conversation.

Finally, at four o'clock, two hours after the turn of the tide, we entered the Rupel. A lock closes the entrance to it. On the wharf we found Admiral Missiessy, the Minister of the Marine, and all the other principal officers, who conducted us by a detestable road to a pretty little gondola, on which we embarked on the Rupel, which flows into the Scheldt at the distance of about two and a half miles.



FACSIMILE OF AN EXTRACT FROM MARIE-LOUISE'S DIARY.

The diary is written in the neat writing of the period in a small morocco-bound volume the size of note-paper. It is in French, a language with which Marie-Louise was perfectly familiar, as she had had French governesses since she was two years old.

After an hour we entered the Scheldt, which is here prodigiously wide. The weather was magnificent.

ARRIVAL AT ANTWERP.

We were saluted by a thousand guns, the report of which half-deafened us—me in particular, for since the occasion on which my father made me fire off an over-loaded cannon I have been unable to bear any loud noise without my left ear beginning to bleed.

We climbed on board the *Charlemagne*, but it required courage to accomplish this, the gangway was like a ladder—the steps being so far apart that we had to clamber up on our knees. Moreover, there was wind enough to cause very disagreeable accidents. I am certain we exhibited our legs to the gentlemen, and I vowed never to climb up a battleship again without putting on trousers. The Minister of the Marine might really have been gallant enough to have had a better stairway constructed for us, but one sees in everything that he is a rude sailor.

One needs to be very agile in mounting a battleship for the first time, in order not to lame oneself. I know I came back to Antwerp with a sprain, two lumps on my head, and a gown covered with tar.

We disembarked at seven o'clock in the middle of an immense crowd, and continued our road in a carriage as far as the house of the Préfet, where we were indifferently lodged. My room looked on one side upon a little garden, on another upon the court, and on the third upon a little street so narrow and dark, and from which there issued such terrible exhalations that I was not able to open the windows during the whole of my stay. We proceeded to dine, and then we went to bed.

On the 1st of May the weather was most magnificent. The Emperor went out at break of day to see the fortifications, and he gave us as a *rendezvous* the Préfecture Maritime, which is a very fine house, where we were to breakfast. The Emperor made us go there at eight o'clock, and at one o'clock he had not yet arrived. What fine *ennui* and what impatience we felt in thus waiting for him may readily be imagined.

At last we embarked at two o'clock to go on board the *Anversois*. Happily, this time the gangway was a little better. The Emperor made the ship's crew manœuvre, while the King of Westphalia amused himself by climbing up all the masts. The Emperor put a Dutch frigate under sail; after that he went on the *Duc d'Almate* and the frigate, but I had too vivid a recollection of my two bruises of the evening previous to have any desire to accompany him, so that I waited for him on board the *Anversois*. We entered as on the evening before, to the sound of a thousand cannon. On coming home I found two rooms on fire. They say this is a sign of good luck. I could have done very well without this sign, for we had a terrible smoke all the day. In the evening the Emperor received the authorities and the ladies resident in the town.

"I CAN BE OBSTINATE TOO."

On the 2nd the Emperor saw the rest of the fortifications. He returned for breakfast. I was again annoyed by that disagreeable Chevalier Jouan (who urged upon the Emperor not to take me into the island of Walcheren), and by the Emperor, who listened to him. Doctors are in reality ignorant; they do not know that more harm is done to us, even when ill, by opposing us than by letting us do as we wish; but I can be obstinate, too, when I want anything, and we shall see which of us will prevail.

The Emperor took me to the dockyard to see the *Friedland*, of eighty-four guns, launched. The *chantier* is the place where the ships are built. In that of Antwerp several ships and frigates can be constructed at the same time. Their hulls are placed in scaffoldings of wood, in which they remain until entirely completed. There were nine here at this time.

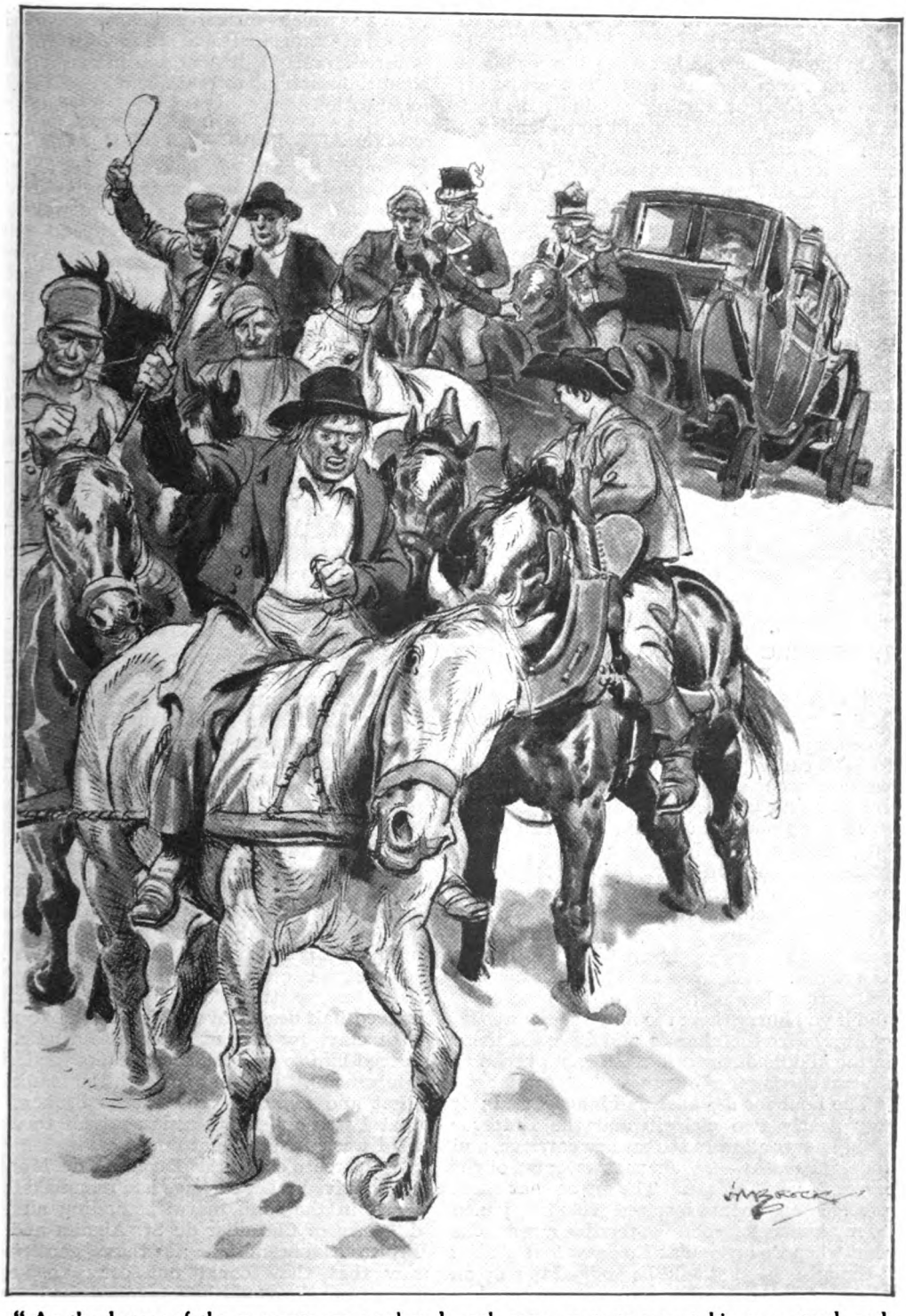
The Emperor made another tour in the *environs*, and I took a drive with the Queen of Westphalia upon the ramparts and about the town. They say that Antwerp in another year will be one of the strongest places in the Empire. There are some fine streets in the city. The tower of the cathedral is as high and as beautiful as that of Strasbourg: the view from it is superb. I should much have liked to have ascended it, but when one travels with the Emperor it is very difficult to amuse and to instruct oneself. One can never do as one wishes.

On the 3rd May the Emperor went to visit the arsenal, the docks, and the magazines. I remained at home to be wearied with the ladies. I am a great deal too uncivilized to remain for a whole day in company. There is only the Duchesse of Montebello whom I take delight in. She is natural and good, whereas these ladies are ill-natured and full of pretensions.

In the evening we saw all the ladies belonging to the town.

On the 4th the Emperor went again to see a ship. I again remained at home, my foot hurt me too much to walk. In the evening there was a ball; as I was lame I had a good reason for not dancing. Besides, I have such obliging doctors about me that they give me an apology whenever I wish.

It was very stormy all day, and hopes of being able to start on the next were given up, as the wind was contrary, and we should be obliged to cross an arm of the sea in order to



"As the horses of the peasants are employed, each man wants to mount his own steed, and there are sometimes as many postilions as horses."

reach Flushing. We were compelled to wait with patience.

On the 5th the weather was still very black and the storm very violent. The Emperor, who was tired of waiting, suddenly decided in the evening that we should go by land and should depart the next morning at six o'clock, taking as few people as possible, clothes for two days, and two services.

It was decided that there should be but the King and Queen of Westphalia, the Viceroy, the Prince de Neufchâtel, the Grand Maréchal Duc d'Istrie, the Duchesse de Montebello, Chevaliers de Beauharnais, de St. Aignan, de Bondy, and de Montaran. The others and the ladies would wait for us at Antwerp.

We left Antwerp, then, on the 6th, three hours later than the Emperor had ordered—for with him it always happens thus. The beginning of the road was sufficiently agreeable. For some two miles we passed between country houses, but at the end of an hour all the beauty disappeared and we found ourselves in a desert of sand, where there was not a blade of grass, only here and there some stunted fir-trees, of which the largest were no bigger than the least in a certain *forêt noire* that I came to know afterwards. This district formerly belonged to Holland.

TRAVELLING WITH SIXTEEN HORSES TO EACH CARRIAGE.

The road became every moment a little worse. The sand was so deep that it became necessary to put on twelve or sixteen horses to each carriage, and notwithstanding that, we only went at a foot's pace. The horses are so badly harnessed in this country that there is no means of getting on; instead of bits, cords are put in their mouths, and the traces are so thin that they break every instant. As the horses of the peasants are employed, each man wants to mount his own steed, and there are sometimes as many postilions as horses. I have counted as many as a dozen. When you wish to make them go faster they bewail the lot of their animals, and if you hurry them too much they unyoke, go away with their horses, and leave you there in the middle of the sand. This happened to several carriages of our *suite*.

The hour for *déjeuner* had long passed; it was nearly two o'clock, and the Emperor would never allow me to eat in a carriage, and for a fine reason—he said that a woman ought never to want to eat. The anger that these precious arguments inspired me with, joined to my hunger, gave me so terrible a headache that when we arrived at Breda at four o'clock I thought that I should be obliged to stop on the road. But the Emperor, who treated us like grenadiers, forced us to continue our journey after his *déjeuner*.

We took *déjeuner* in a rather wretched château which formerly belonged to the Prince of Orange. Breda is a small town, but is rather pretty; it contains from seven to eight thousand inhabitants, and has excellent fortifications.

"MEN ARE INSUPPORTABLE BEINGS."

After the Emperor had received all the authorities we resumed our journey. I was in so bad a humour that the Emperor was displeased, but I was indifferent to that, and I let him grumble as he liked without answering him. There is nothing that quiets men so much as this. They are insupportable beings, and if I were ever to come back in another world I would not marry again—most certainly not.

The road was still as monotonous and the weather was dreadful. The wind blew terribly, and the rain was so heavy that we were inundated, for the Emperor, contrary to his usual practice, found that it was stifling, and opened all the windows for the pleasure of contradicting me. At eight o'clock the Maréchal Duc de Reggio came with several generals to our carriage and informed us that we were only an hour's journey distant from Bois-le-Duc. Notwithstanding this, we did not arrive there till midnight.

I found there, fortunately, one of my waiting-women. I was so ill and fatigued that I went to bed directly without eating. I had dreadful pains in the stomach, and fever, besides which there was so much noise in the court that it was impossible to sleep. I sent to find Chevalier Bourdier, and the consoling news was brought to me that he had been forgotten at Breda, where he had got out of his carriage for a minute. Finally, at one o'clock, I heard my door open (for it had neither bolt nor key) and I heard someone enter very softly. It was the Prince de Neufchâtel, who supposed that he was in the Emperor's room, and who, when he saw me, was quite confounded.

At last, at two o'clock, Chevalier Jouan arrived half dead, covered from head to foot with clay, for he had fallen into a hole. I begged him to give me some hétera [hederin, a febrifuge]. He went to fetch the medicine chest and found all the bottles broken, so that I was obliged to resign myself to wait till I was cured without remedies.

At three o'clock the Duchesse de Montebello arrived; her carriage had remained four hours in the sand, notwithstanding all the diligence of Chevalier de St. Aignan and of Prince Aldobrandini. As these gentlemen saw that they could not drag the carriage from the sand, they unyoked the horses, took for a saddle a sack of oats, and went to seek help at Bois-le-Duc—whilst Chevalier de Beauharnais, instead of assisting them,

remained quietly in the carriage, grumbling because he could not get on. The Duc de Bassano, losing patience because his coachman would not proceed, got out of his carriage with evil designs against that poor man, but heaven punished him—he fell into a pool up to his neck, and although he became very polite to the peasant, the latter would not pull him out, and he was obliged to remain there until another carriage came to his assistance. There was indeed a great deal to laugh at when on the next day the company related their adventures.

I was so tired on the 7th that I did not get out of bed till dinner-time. Moreover, the town and the *environs* were not sufficiently ravishing to tempt one to visit them. The Emperor went out to see the fortifications and received the authorities. I passed my day in talking with the Duchesse, for all my books and work had remained at Antwerp.

The following morning we quitted Bois-le-Duc and finally arrived, at nine o'clock in the evening, at Bergen-op-Zoom.

The houses there are dreadful—that in which we were lodged was the best in the town ; for staircase we had a fine wooden ladder, and for apartments two rooms ; notwithstanding which the Emperor insisted on staying there the next day. The other houses were in the same style. The first person whom I met was Chevalier Bourdier, who had established himself in my room. He was furious because he had been left at Breda, and assured me that he would send in his resignation. It was in vain that I talked to him ; I could not calm him. I got angry in my turn, and I told him to go because he wearied me. Happily, he fulfilled this request immediately ; he did not expect that a like fate was in store for him the next day.

NAPOLEON IN A BAD HUMOUR.

We sat down to dinner. The Emperor was terribly displeased at his quarters, and as he could not lay the blame on one of us it all fell upon the dinner. At each dish he said, " What a bad *ragoût !* Now, if there were a *gigot !* " It was brought to him. Then he said, " If there were some salad ! " It was brought to him. When he saw that the same happened for each thing he went off to bed. But what amused me most was the Duchesse de Montebello, who was laughing, notwithstanding the signs I made to her. She is really not courtier enough for the world in which we live, and she has one great fault which will turn out badly for her—it is that she is too much attached to me.

Every one retired to their rooms determined to sleep the whole of the next day. The King and Queen of Westphalia found fair accommodation, but without beds or chairs ; the Prince de Neufchâtel a room without any glass to the window, so that he was obliged to make use of his papers to stop it up.

The Viceroy, who arrived too late for dinner, found himself quartered on an invalid who had a dreadful catarrh, and who for dinner gave him some boiled lemonade and some bread, and in presenting him with the glass said to him, " I cannot offer you a better ; it is the one out of which I drink myself," and the Viceroy was obliged to make use of it.

I went to bed with the firm intention of not being awakened the next day. It was a vain hope, for the Emperor, who apparently did not find himself sufficiently well lodged, mounted his horse at four o'clock and decided on his ride that we should be awakened at seven to start at eight.

He decided, also, to leave one service here. The confusion caused by this unexpected departure was so great that all the packages were left behind. The Emperor, who would not wait, nearly left there also the King and Queen of Westphalia, who arrived at the moment when we were embarking on the canal. The Viceroy, who had not found his lodging sufficiently comfortable, had slept elsewhere, and, it appears, had told his valet to come and fetch him late in the morning. The man had taken away his uniform, and had locked the door from outside. Happily, the room was on the ground floor, and the Viceroy jumped out from the window on to the *place* rather lightly clothed, to the great astonishment of all the inhabitants.

I do not know who was ill-natured enough to tell this story to the Emperor, who was very angry ; it was the cause of the Viceroy being sent back to Paris on our return to Brussels.

We embarked at the place where the canal rejoins the Scheldt, which is here more than two miles wide. The tide begins to be felt here. The sea air gave us such an appetite that we partook of a cold *déjeuner*. I do not know what evil spirit had given us these ideas, for everybody became very ill. The Queen of Westphalia and myself were the least so, because we had taken the precaution of immediately placing ourselves in the open air. But the Emperor, the Viceroy, and the Duc d'Istrie were violently sick.

SEASICKNESS CAUSES A CHANGE OF PLANS.

This determined them to disembark at ten o'clock upon the Isle of South Beveland, without knowing if there were any carriages there to convey us to the other side. The Duc d'Istrie by means of inquiry at last found us two or three conveyances of the peasants, which were neither carts nor carriages, and to which two horses were yoked. They were so high that a ladder was needed to get into

them, and so narrow that two people could scarcely sit together. They had no springs and were very hard, and, to complete the misfortunes, there were a quantity of very disagreeable small occupants.

The Duc d'Istrie mounted his horse to act as courier, in order that boats should be prepared for us on the other side of the island. The carriage in which were the Duchesse de Montebello, the Comtesse de Liverstein, and the Viceroy upset and was broken into a thousand pieces—the latter alighted upon his legs, the Duchesse escaped with a tumble, but the Comtesse de Liverstein was dragged by the horses and was badly hurt on the elbow.

We continued our journey as far as Middelburg, where we arrived at five o'clock.

My apartment looked upon the court, which was filled with fine trees. We were entertained by some military music which was charming, and which I would have listened to with pleasure if it had not prevented me from sleeping.

My attendants arrived at last at three o'clock, so that I was able to go to bed, but they did not bring me anything to change, so the Emperor will be obliged to see me until he leaves this place with the same dress and the same chemise.

I made up my mind to this lightly enough, but the Queen of Westphalia did not do the same; her women did not arrive for twenty-four hours after us, so that she made the unfortunate Comtesse de Liverstein wait all night in the antechamber to make tea for her, and when it was brought she scolded her, would not have any, and cried from rage. One must really be an angel in sweetness to support her manners. I know very well what I should have done if I had been *Dame du Palais!*

I did not awake on the 10th till midday, and the Emperor surprised us agreeably by saying that he would take us at two o'clock to see the ocean.

"I WAS OUT OF TEMPER THE WHOLE DAY."

He gave us *rendezvous* at the Fort de Haag, for three o'clock. The Queen of Westphalia kept me waiting more than an hour, which put me into as great a state of impatience as her own. I was really angry in thinking how vexed the Emperor would be with me if I did not arrive, therefore I was out of temper during the whole day. I am in general a good-natured person, perhaps too weak, but when I am in a passion (as that happens very rarely) I am perhaps more wayward than other women.

We arrived at four o'clock at the Fort de Haag, behind which are the dunes, which are hills of sand of different forms. Nevertheless, we could see the tips of masts, which told us that the sea was not far distant.

As I was impatient at not being able to see it at once, we made them, while waiting, give us some cream, which is excellent in this country, and which is preserved in green bottles of a singular composition.

The Emperor wished to show us the ocean directly, but the dunes were impassable at this place, and we were obliged to make another small journey of two hours in carriages to find a place where we could ascend. At last we found it, and I was much astonished on getting out to find my legs deeply buried in sand. Each step we took was equally troublesome, but it was nothing for travellers as intrepid as ourselves, and we were well repaid by the fine view that was discovered when we reached the top of the hills.

We saw the ocean, which appeared like an immense surface of water bounded only by the horizon; the sun was setting, and coloured the sea like a rainbow. The sea was very calm, except on part of the shore, where it dashed with violence upon the rocks. The Emperor called for maps, and conversed with the engineers. The Queen of Westphalia and I amused ourselves by picking up the shells with which the sea-shore was covered. Some were charming. It is said, however, that those of the Mediterranean and of the Indies are infinitely finer. These shells, combined with the unwholesome air, were the cause, thanks to the malice of the King, of my having three attacks of fever.

In the middle of our amusement I saw that the Viceroy and the Duc d'Istrie were watching us in a very peculiar manner and were laughing at us very much. I had no time to ask them the reason before the sea came with great force and faster than we were able to fly, and wetted us to the knees. Fortunately, it returned as quickly as it had come. They explained to us that this was the usual effect of the tide, but these gentlemen might have been gallant enough to apprise us of it.

We gave up our search to go and ask the Emperor for permission to change. The answer was: "Remain, ladies; this bath will do you good," and he made us wait till eight o'clock. When we got home we dined, and the same military music was performed as on the previous evening.

The 11th was a shocking day, but it did not prevent the Emperor from going a second time to see Flushing. I remained in bed with a fever. I do not know what has become of my iron constitution; it has disappeared entirely. I am sure that it is owing to Messieurs les Médeçins, who during the whole journey have done nothing but dose me.

The Emperor, on his return, related to us

" The Queen of Westphalia and I amused ourselves by picking up shells, when the sea came faster than we were able to fly and wetted us to the knees."

that he had seen an English frigate, which approached within range of the cannon of Flushing, and that he had ordered them to bombard her so hotly that she retired quicker than she had come.

On the morning of the 12th the Emperor held a Council. It is not really our fault if we heard everything, for the Saloon was close to my room and the Emperor shouted terribly loudly.

Mr. Cray's Adventures

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

No. 4
The Reckoning with Otto Schreed

Illustrated by S. ABBEY

MR. JOSEPH P. CRAY followed the usual routine observed by members of the "Americans in London" Society on the occasion of their weekly lunches. He left his coat and hat in the cloak-room, and deposited the ticket which he received in exchange in his waistcoat pocket. Afterwards he slipped into the ante-room, where a little crowd of men were thronging around a narrow counter, exchanging hearty greetings and indulging in various forms of pre-luncheon nourishment. Mr. Cray, who had a mesmeric way of getting served over the shoulders of waiting throngs, disposed of a small cocktail in a matter of seconds, made his way to the reception-room, where the guest of the day stood by the side of his host, exchanging platitudes and handshakes with the little stream of arrivals, and a few minutes later wandered into the luncheon-room, where he discovered the round table for four at which he was placed, exchanged friendly greetings with the two men who were already in their seats, recognized the fact with a little sigh that they were not kindred spirits, and glanced with interest at the vacant place on his right hand, no claimant to which had as yet arrived.

It was a crowded gathering, and it takes some time for six hundred men to take their places and be seated. Mr. Cray studied the menu with mild approval, glanced through the wine list, and decided to postpone for the moment his decision as to liquid refreshment, and finally, yielding to an impulse of not unnatural curiosity, he raised the card which reposed upon the tablecloth opposite the vacant chair on his right and read it :—

MR. OTTO M. SCHREED.

The four walls of the banqueting-room fell away. The pleasant hum of voices, the clatter of crockery and the popping of corks fell upon deaf ears. Mr. Cray's blue eyes were set in a steady stare. Gone his morning coat, his irreproachable linen and carefully-tied tie, his patent boots and well-creased trousers. He was back in the tight, ill-fitting khaki of months ago, a strange, sober figure in the midst of the bustle of life, yet living under the shadow of death. He stood at the door of the canteen and he saw them marching by, a long, snake-like procession, some singing, some shouting cheery greetings, some pale and limping. Back to the opening in the hills he could trace them, the hill which had once been a forest and now seemed as though a cataclysm had smitten it, a nightmare of bare stumps, of shell and crater holes. The whole horizon seemed streaked with little puffs of smoke. The sound of the guns was incessant. There were times when even the ground beneath his feet shrank. The boys were on their way to the mess tents after a stiff twelve hours. He stepped back into the canteen, tasted the coffee in the great urn, ran through the stock of extra provisions, looked carefully round to see that all was ready for the hordes of his customers who would presently

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throng the place. They came much sooner than they should have done, a little sullen, many of them cursing, pushed and struggled for a place at the counter, swept him clear of the whole of his stock of extra provisions. He could hear their voices.

"More of that filthy tack!"

"Say, there's some of those chaps at Washington deserve to swing!"

"What is it to-day, boys?" Mr. Cray asked.

There was a string of lurid adjectives. Mr. Cray looked as concerned as he felt.

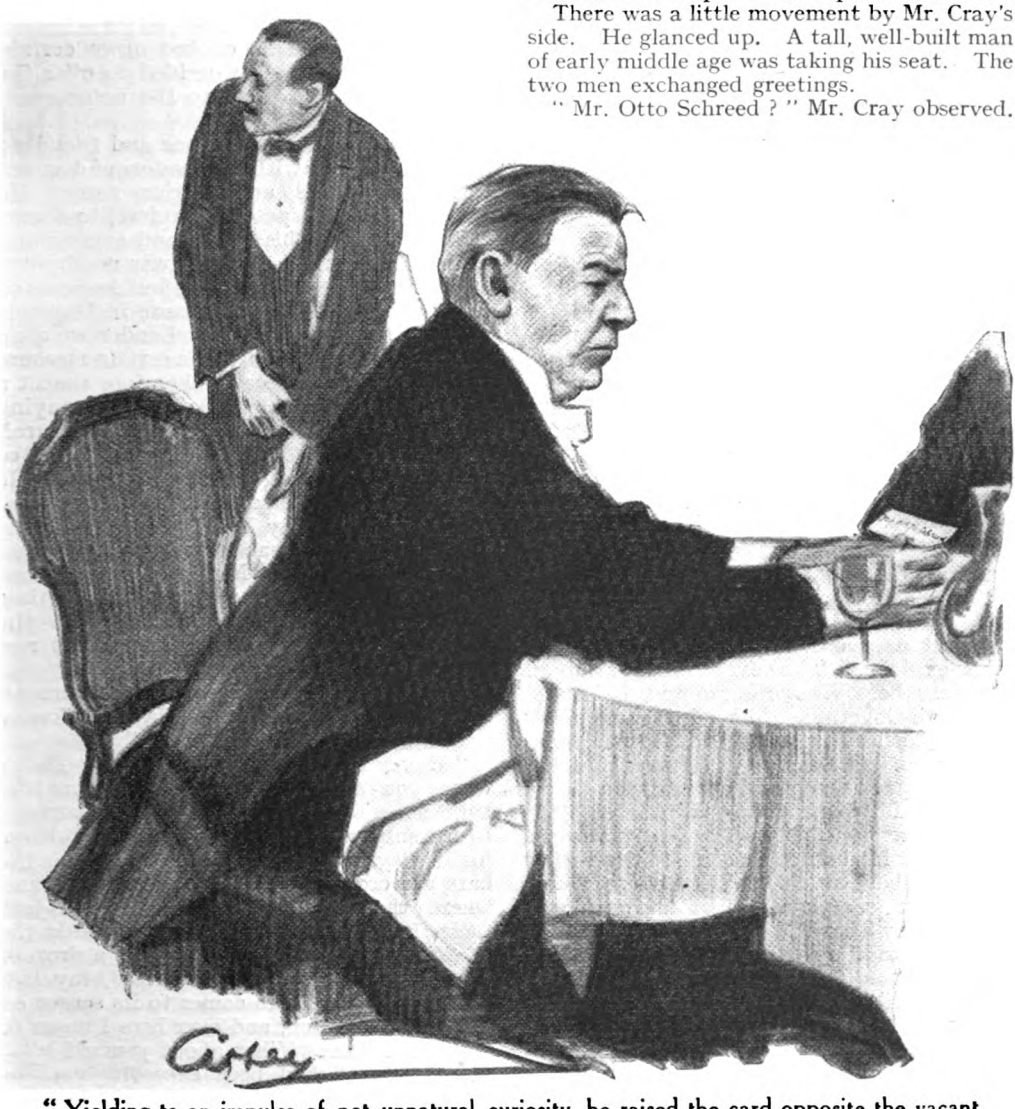
"More of that stinking beef, eh?" he asked, sympathetically.

He was met with a chorus of groans. A score or more had left the counter already, ill before they could reach their coffee. He heard the curses of further hordes struggling to get in. Then the scene faded away. He walked down the great impromptu annexe to the hospital and spoke to one of the doctors. The doctor's adjectives made the words of his patients sound like the babbling of children.

"More cases of that bad beef," was the plain English of what he said. "We are just in the one corner of the line, too, where we can't rely on stores for a few days. Curse the man who ever made the stuff, and the Government inspector who passed it." . . .

There was a little movement by Mr. Cray's side. He glanced up. A tall, well-built man of early middle age was taking his seat. The two men exchanged greetings.

"Mr. Otto Schreed?" Mr. Cray observed.



"Yielding to an impulse of not unnatural curiosity, he raised the card opposite the vacant chair and read it."

The man winced a little, but acknowledged his identity.

"And your name?" he asked.

"Mr. Joseph P. Cray," Mr. Cray replied. "We seem to be neighbours, Mr. Schreed. Will you join me in a bottle of wine?"

"That's a great idea," was the hearty response.

So Mr. Cray did what those few months ago he would have deemed impossible—he fraternized with Mr. Otto Schreed, of Chicago, exporter of tinned beef. They talked together of many subjects. Their conversation was the conversation of two patriotic and high-minded Americans, with the obvious views of the well-meaning man. Mr. Schreed, encouraged towards the end of the meal by his companion's friendliness, and warmed a little by the wine which he had drunk, became confidential.

"Say, it's a hard question I'm going to put to you, Mr. Cray," he said, lowering his voice a little, "but does my name suggest anything to you?"

Mr. Cray took up the card and looked at it.

"Can't say that it does," he replied, "except that your front name reads German."

"That ain't it," the other observed. "My father was a German all right, but I was born in Chicago, and I am a good American citizen. It isn't that. I was one of the unlucky devils that got into some trouble with the Government contractors."

"And I was one of those," Mr. Cray mused, "who spent a hundred dollars cabling to the head of the Y.M.C.A. in the States exactly my opinion of you." But aloud, Mr. Cray's words betrayed nothing of this fact.

"Say, that was hard luck!" he admitted. "How did it happen?"

"Just as those things do happen," the other explained, "however almighty careful you may be. We were canning night and day, with Government officials standing over us, and Washington wiring all the time, 'Get a move on. Get a move on. We want the stuff.' I guess some of the foremen got a bit careless. I was worn out myself. The weather was moist and hot, and a load or two of stuff got in that shouldn't. Not but what I always believed," Mr. Schreed went on, "that the complaints were exaggerated; but anyway the Y.M.C.A. busybodies over yonder took it up, and they got me before the Court."

"Did it cost you much?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"They fined me fifty thousand dollars," the other replied, "and I had to sell out. Just at the time, too," he went on, gloomily, "when one was making so much money that one couldn't count it."

IT was just at this moment that Mr. Cray was on the point of raising his voice and of speaking words which, without doubt, would have led to his neighbour's precipitate ejection from the room. And then something struck him. There was something more than the natural humiliation of a punished man in Mr. Schreed's drawn face and furtive expression. There was something beyond the look of the man who has done wrong and borne an unacceptable punishment. There was still fear; there was still terror of some unnamed possibility. Mr. Cray saw this, and he held his peace. He took his thoughts back a few months to the little conversation he had had with the doctor in that impromptu hospital. He recalled the latter's impassioned words, and he choked down certain rebellious feelings. He decided to offer the right hand of fellowship to the unfortunate Mr. Otto Schreed.

Mr. Otto Schreed was alone and friendless in a strange city, with the shadow of disgrace resting upon his unattractive name. He was more than disposed, therefore, to accept the advances of this genial and companionable new acquaintance. He was not by disposition a gregarious person, but he was too uncultured to find any pleasure in books or pictures, the newspapers of London were an unknown world to him, and a certain measure of companionship became therefore almost a necessity. It appeared that he was staying at the Milan Hotel, and it was quite natural, therefore, that he should see a great deal of his new friend during the next few days. He was not at first disposed to be communicative. He said very little about his plans, and he asked a great many personal questions, some of which Mr. Cray evaded, and others of which he answered with artless candour. Mr. Cray's connection with the Y.M.C.A. and his work in France was not once alluded to.

"Say, what's keeping you over here?" Mr. Schreed asked one day. "You've nothing against the other side?"

"Haven't I!" Mr. Cray replied. "That's where you're making the mistake of your life. I am not a drunkard," he went on, warming to his subject, "but I am a man who loves his liberty, and I hate a country where the bars are crowded out with soft drinks, and where the darned waiters wink and jerk their thumbs round the corner towards the apothecary's shop when you want a drop of Scotch. I am over here, Schreed, my lad, till the United States comes to its senses on the liquor question, and over here I mean to stop until then. What about yourself?"

Mr. Schreed had been exceedingly close-mouthed about his own movements, but this morning he spoke with more freedom of his plans.

" I am not so strong as you on the liquor question," he admitted, " but I feel I have been hardly done with over there by the Government, and I'm not hurrying back yet awhile. I thought some," he went on, after a moment's pause, glancing sideways at Mr. Cray as though to watch the effect of his words, " of taking a little tour out to the battlefields of France."

" That's quite an idea," Mr. Cray admitted, with interest.

His companion looked around to make sure that they were alone.

" I don't mind confiding to you, Cray," he said, " that I have another reason for wanting to get out there. When the Stores Department discovered that something was wrong with those few thousand tins of beef of mine, they burnt the lot. They sent a certificate to Washington as to its condition, upon which I was convicted and fined, although I was well able to prove that the week the defective canning must have been done I was taking a few days' vacation. However, that's neither here nor there. I made inquiries as to whether any of it was still in existence, and I was told that before any had been opened a matter of fifty tins or so had been doled out in some French village where the peasants hadn't got any food. Nothing was ever heard about these."

" I see," Mr. Cray murmured, and there was nothing in his face to indicate that he had found the intelligence interesting.

" I kind of thought," Mr. Schreed continued, " that I'd like to look around over there, and if any of those tins were still in existence I'd buy them up and destroy them, so as to avoid any further trouble. You see, they all have my name and trade mark on the outside. The Government insisted upon that."

" Rather like looking for a needle in a haystack," Mr. Cray remarked.

" Not so much," the other replied. " I know the name of the place where our men were billeted when they opened the stuff, and the name of the village to which they sent fifty tins. I thought I'd just look around there, and if there are no traces of any—well, I've done the best I could. Then I thought some of coming home by Holland."

" Business in Holland, eh ? " Mr. Cray inquired.

" Not exactly business—or rather, if it is, it wouldn't take more than an hour or two," Mr. Schreed announced.

" When did you think of going ? "

" Next week. They tell me they're running some tours from Paris out to the battlefields. The one that goes to Château Thierry would serve my purpose. The worst of it is I can't speak a word of the lingo."

" It's dead easy," Mr. Cray observed. " I've been going to Paris too many years not to have picked up a bit."

" You wouldn't care about a trip out with me, I suppose," Mr. Schreed suggested, " just in a friendly fashion, you understand, each paying his own dues ? "

" I don't know," Mr. Cray replied, cautiously. " Next week did you say you were going ? "

" I'm fixing it up to leave on Wednesday."

" It's some trip," Mr. Cray said, thoughtfully.

" A day or two in Paris wouldn't do us any harm," Mr. Schreed remarked, with a slow smile which degenerated into a leer.

" We'll take a bite together at seven o'clock to-night," Mr. Cray decided, " and I'll let you know. I don't know as I can see anything to prevent my going, providing I can get accommodation. I might be able to help you with the language, too. Finish up in Holland, you said, eh ? "

" I don't know as you'd care to go up that far with me," Mr. Schreed said, doubtfully. " I sha'n't be stopping there, either. You might wait in Paris."

Mr. Cray smiled beatifically.

" Paris," he murmured. " Gee ! I think I'll go, Schreed."

MR. OTTO SCHREED was both surprised and gratified at his companion's proficiency in the French language and his capacity for making travelling endurable. Their journey to Paris was accomplished under the most favourable circumstances, and by dint of a long argument and great tact the very inferior accommodation which had been secured for them was cancelled, and rooms with a small *salon* and bathrooms *en suite* provided at a well-known hotel. As a guide to Paris itself, except to the American bars and the restaurants pure and simple, Mr Cray was perhaps a little disappointing, but his companion himself, during those first few days, was restless and eager to be off on their quest. On the third day Mr. Cray announced their imminent departure.

" Say, I've done better for you than these Cook's chars-à-bancs," he announced, triumphantly. " I've engaged a private car, and we can get out to Château Thierry, see the whole of that part of the line, visit the village you were speaking of, and get back before nightfall. Some hustle, what ? "

" Fine ! " Mr. Schreed declared, showing every impatience to depart. " Does the man speak any English ? "

" I don't know as he does," Mr. Cray admitted ; " but that don't matter any, I guess, as long as I'm around all the time."

Mr. Schreed seemed a little disappointed.

" How about making the inquiries in

these small grocers' shops, or what you call them ? "

" I shall be along," Mr. Cray reminded him. " You can stand by my side and hear what they say."

So the pilgrimage started. Mr. Cray felt a great silence creep over him as he stood once more on well-remembered ground. It was a bright day in early October, and the familiar landmarks for many miles were visible. Behind that remnant of wood a thousand Americans had been ambushed. On the hillside there, a great mine had been sprung. Down in the valley below, the corpses of his countrymen had lain so thick that Mr. Cray found himself remembering that one awful night when every spare hand—he himself included—had been pressed into the stretcher-bearers' service. He grew more and more silent as they neared their journey's end. Mr. Schreed appeared to be a trifle bored.

" Lutaples is the name of the village we want," he announced, as they began to pass a few white-plastered cottages.

Mr. Cray nodded.

" I know," he said, reminiscently. " Our canteen was in the hollow, just at the bottom there."

" Our canteen ? " Mr. Schreed repeated.

" The American canteen," Mr. Cray explained. " I've been making inquiries for you. So far as I can gather, there was only one shop in Lutaples at the time, and it's up this end of the village. However, we'll soon find out all about it now."

THEY stopped at a small estaminet, and here trouble nearly came, for no disguise could conceal from the warm-hearted little landlord the kindly, absurd fat man in tight uniform who had fed him and his wife and children and left them money behind to make a fresh start. Fortunately, however, Schreed had lingered behind, making a vain attempt to converse with the chauffeur, and Cray had time, in a few rapid sentences, to put a certain matter before his friend Pierre. So that when Schreed returned and took his seat by Cray's side before the marble table in the village street, Pierre was able to serve them with liqueurs and speak as though to strangers. Mr. Cray conversed with him for some time.

" Well, what does he say ? " Schreed asked eagerly, when he had gone in.

" There was only one grocer's shop in the village at the time we were in occupation," Mr. Cray explained, " and the majority of the stores presented by the Americans were handed over to him for distribution. There's the store, plumb opposite—*Henri Lalarge. Epicier.*"

" That mean ' Grocer ' ? " Otto Schreed asked.

" Some of it does. Let's be getting along."

Mr. Cray led the way across the cobbled street. M. Lalarge was short, fat, and black-whiskered. As they entered his shop the landlord from the estaminet opposite issued from the back quarters.

" What's he been doing over here ? " Schreed demanded, suspiciously.

Mr. Cray shrugged his shoulders.

" I suppose these fellows all live on one another's doorsteps," he observed.

The result of the landlord's visit, however, was that, although the tears of welcome glistened in the eyes of the warm-hearted M. Lalarge, he greeted the two men as strangers. Mr. Cray, having satisfied himself as to his companion's absolute ignorance of the language, talked fluently to the grocer in rapid French. Presently he appeared satisfied, and turned to Schreed.

" He says he had fifty tins," he explained, " but they were distributed half an hour after he received them. The complaint was made from some of the villagers, and the unopened tins were returned and burned. There is a chemist's shop at the farther end of the village, where it would be as well to make inquiries. The chauffeur might take you there and I will explain to him what you want to ask for. Meanwhile, I will see the *curé*."

Mr. Schreed saw nothing to object to in the arrangement, and drove off with the chauffeur. M. Lalarge, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, threw his arms round Mr. Cray and kissed him.

" Heaven has brought you back ! " he exclaimed. " Our deliverer—our Saint ! But how thin—how wasted ! "

" Simply a matter of clothes, Henri my boy," Cray assured him. " Uncle Sam used to pinch us a bit tight about the loins. And now how goes it, eh ? "

" Thanks to the benevolence of monsieur, everything prospers," M. Lalarge declared. " His little loan—but give me time to write the cheque—it can be paid this moment."

" Not on your life ! " Mr. Cray replied, vigorously. " Not a franc, Henri. We both did good work, eh, when those guns were thundering, and dirty Fritz was skulking behind the hills there ? Finished, Henri. I am a rich man, and what you call a loan was my little thank-offering. We did our best together for the poor people, you know."

" But, monsieur—— " the little grocer sobbed.

" About those tins," Mr. Cray interrupted. " You have two ? "

" I kept them, monsieur," the man explained, " because I read in the paper that

some day inquiry might be held into all these matters."

"And an inquiry is going to be held," Mr. Cray declared. "What you have to do, Henri, is to pack those two tins securely and send them to me by registered post to the Ritz Hotel, Paris."

"It shall be done, monsieur."

"Were there any who died after eating the stuff?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"Two," the little grocer answered. "They are buried in the civic cemetery. One has talked but little of these things. The Americans came as saviours, and this was an accident."

Cray glanced down the street. His companion was still interviewing the chemist.

"One *petit verre*, Henri," he said, "for the sake of old times."

M. Lalarge threw aside his apron.

"And to drink to the great goodness of monsieur," he responded.

"M. Lalarge threw his arms round Mr. Cray and kissed him."

Mr. Otto Schreed was in high good-humour that evening, on the way back to Paris. He insisted upon paying for a little dinner at the Ambassador's and a box at the Folies Bergères. He spent money freely, for him, and drank far more wine than usual. As he drank he expanded.

"It is like a nightmare passed away," he confided to his companion. "I know now that no one else in the world will ever suffer because of that terrible mistake. There is not a single tin of the condemned beef in existence."

"A load off your mind, eh?" Mr. Cray murmured.

Mr. Schreed smiled a peculiar smile.

"For more reasons than you know of, my friend," he confided. "Now my little trip to Holland, and after that I am a free man."

"When are you off there?" his companion inquired.

"The day after to-morrow—Thursday," was the prompt reply. "And, Cray——"

"Something bothering you?" the latter remarked, as Schreed hesitated.

"Just this, old fellow. My little trip to Holland is unimportant in its way, and in another sense it's a trip I want to do alone. Do you get me?"

"Sure!" Mr. Cray replied. "I am no butter-in. There are some of the boys in this gay little burg I haven't had time to look up yet. When shall you be back?"

"Monday," was the eager reply—"Monday, sure. I'll go alone then, Cray. I guess it would be better. But look here. Get together a few of your friends, and we'll have a little dinner the night of my return. At my expense, you understand. You've been very useful to me over here, and I should like to make you a little return. Ask anyone you please, and take a couple of boxes for

any show you fancy. It isn't the way I live as a rule, but I've a fancy for making a celebration of it."

"That's easy," Mr. Cray declared. "It shall be some celebration, I can tell you. We'll dine in the hotel here, and I promise there shall be one or two people you'll be interested to meet."

So on the Thursday morning Mr. Otto Schreed started for Holland, and Mr. Joseph P. Cray, with a brown-paper parcel under his arm, set out to pay a few calls in Paris.

WHEN Mr. Otto Schreed made his punctual appearance in the hotel *salon* on Monday evening at a few minutes before eight he found Mr. Cray and three other guests awaiting him. Mr. Cray was busy mixing cocktails, so was unable to shake hands. He looked around and nodded.

"Glad you're punctual, Schreed," he said. "Pleasant trip?"

"Fine!"

"Business turn out all right?"

"Couldn't have been better. Won't you introduce me to these gentlemen, Cray?"

"Sure!" Mr. Cray replied. "Gentlemen, this is Mr. Otto Schreed of Chicago—Colonel Wilmot, of the American Intelligence Department, Mr. Neville, of the same service, and Dr. Lemarten."

"Delighted to meet you all, gentlemen," Mr. Schreed declared.

His outstretched hand was uselessly offered. Neville and Colonel Wilmot contented themselves with a military salute. The Frenchman bowed. Mr. Schreed for the first moment was conscious of a vague feeling of uneasiness. He turned towards Cray, who was approaching with a little tray upon which were four cocktails.

"Hope you've ordered a good dinner, Cray," he said, "and that these gentlemen are ready to do justice to it. Why, you're a cocktail short!"

Colonel Wilmot, Mr. Neville, and Dr. Lemarten had each accepted a wineglass. Mr. Cray took the other one.

"And, dash it all! the table's only laid for four!" Schreed continued, as he gazed with dismay at the empty silver tray. "Is this a practical joke?"

Mr. Cray shook his head.

"One of us," he confided, "is not having a cocktail. One of us is not dining. That one, Otto Schreed, is you."

Schreed was suddenly pale. He backed a little towards the door, gripping the back of a chair with his hand.

"Say, what the devil does this mean?" he demanded.

"You just stay where you are and you shall hear," Mr. Cray replied, setting down his empty glass. "I worked out at that little village of Lutaples for the last year of the war—ran an American canteen there for the Y.M.C.A. I was there when your filthy beef was unloaded upon the boys. I saw their sufferings."

"God!" Schreed muttered beneath his breath. "And you never told me!"

"I never told you," Cray assented, "although I came pretty near telling you with an end of my fist that day at the luncheon club. Glad I didn't, now. When I tumbled to it that you were scared about any more of those tins being in existence I began to guess how things were. I came over with you to be sure you didn't get them. I got two tins from M. Lalarge, and a nice tale he had to tell me about the rest. Dr. Lemarten here analysed them and prepared a report. He's here to tell you about it."

"The beef was poisoned," the Frenchman said, calmly. "My report has been handed to Colonel Wilmot."

"It's a lie!" Schreed declared, trembling. "Besides, this matter has been dealt with. I have paid my fine. It is finished."

"Not on your life," Mr. Cray replied. "Ten thousand tins of your bully beef, Otto Schreed, contained poison. No wonder you were glad to get out of it, as you thought, with a fine. Now we'll move on a step. You've just come back from Holland. You may not have known it, but Mr. Neville here, of the American Intelligence Department, was your fellow-passenger. You cashed five drafts at the Amsterdam Bank, amounting in all to something like five hundred thousand dollars of American money. Half of that went to your credit in London, the other half you've got with you. Blood-money, Otto Schreed—foul, stinking blood-money!"

Schreed was on the point of collapse.

"You have employed spies to dog me?" he shouted.

"We don't call the officers of the American Intelligence Department spies," Mr. Cray observed, coldly.

"Otto Schreed," Colonel Wilmot said, speaking for the first time, "I have a warrant for your arrest, and an extradition warrant from the French Government. You will leave for Cherbourg to-night and be taken back to New York."

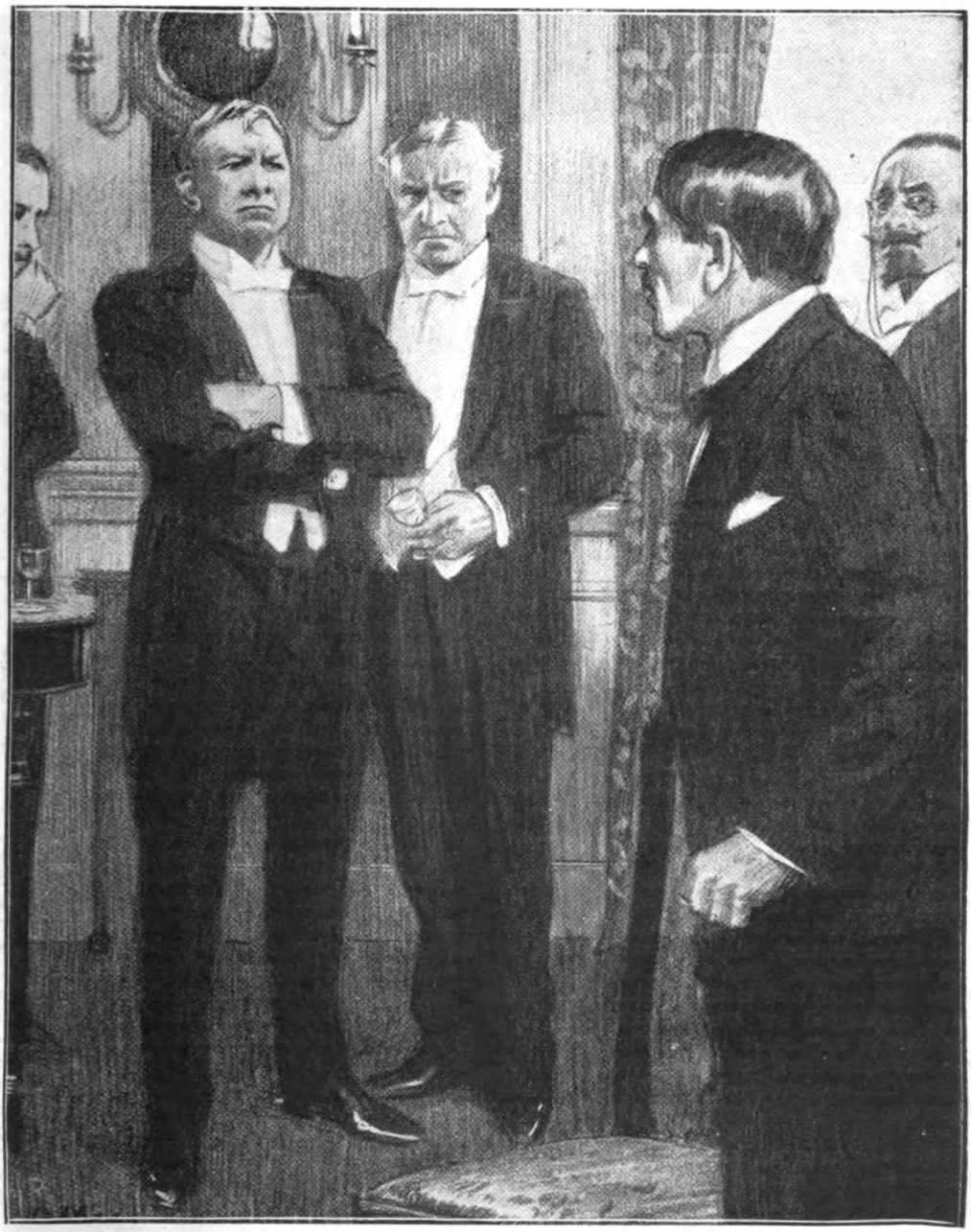
"On what charge?" Schreed faltered.

"Political conspiracy—perhaps murder."

Colonel Wilmot walked to the door and called in two men who were waiting outside. Schreed collapsed.

"I've two hundred and fifty thousand dollars here," he shrieked. "Can't we arrange this? Cray! Colonel Wilmot!"

The two men were obliged to drag him out.



"Schreed was on the point of collapse. 'You have employed spies to dog me?' he shouted."

Mr. Cray moved to the window and threw it open.

"What we want," he said, "is fresh air."

Colonel Wilmot smiled.

"He was a poisonous beast, Cray," he said, "but you've done a fine stroke of business for the United States Government, and we're anxious to drink your health."

Two waiters, followed by a *maître d'hôtel*, were already in the room. The latter came forward and bowed.

"*Monsieur est servi*," he announced.

(Another story in this series will appear next month.)

The Ming Vase

By KATHLYN RHODES

Illustrated by W. Smithson Broadhead

JULIE AYLMER knelt on the window seat of the small sitting-room of a flat in Chelsea and looked out over the river with a very wistful expression in her sea-grey eyes.

It was a perfect July evening, fitting close to a glorious summer day. At this hour, in a hundred shady lanes, knee-deep in ferns, happy lovers wandered hand-in-hand beneath the arching trees. On the river countless punts were moored in dusky back-waters, and by the silver sea, which all day long had flashed in sapphire gaiety beneath the sun, men and women walked gratefully, drinking in the salt freshness which was so unlike the dusty, gritty heat of the city on a day such as this had been.

But up here in the Chelsea flat the air was close and stale in spite of widely-opened windows; and Julie's cheeks were very pale as she knelt and gazed out into the evening sunshine.

No one, not even Leonard, knew how she hated summer in London, how her whole being cried out for the dewy freshness of the cool green country, the invigorating tang of the tonic sea-air. She was a country girl, born and bred, and although she would not have exchanged her lot, as Leonard's wife, for that of any other woman in the world, she did sometimes wish—and felt herself a traitor in the wishing—that Len's calling had been one easy to follow in some quiet country home.

But Len was an artist; and everyone knows that for an artist—especially a struggling one—London is the only possible *milieu;* and so Julie hid her distaste for the city and struggled bravely on in the little flat which sometimes seemed to her to be a veritable cage.

This summer, too, bad luck had dogged their footsteps. At Whitsuntide Len had fallen ill. A chill, caught on a river excursion, had developed into pneumonia; and for many days Julie had known the pinch of a real and woeful suspense, which had given way, finally, to a less violent but still poignant anxiety. For long Leonard had been unable to handle a brush; and several commissions, small enough, yet financially important to the youthful pair, had been perforce unfulfilled. Also, Aylmer's appointment as second master at a neighbouring Art School had been temporarily filled during his illness; and although the post was to revert to him next session, for the moment it and the emolument therefrom were in the possession of the scarcely less needy student who had deputized for him during the weeks of his absence.

Altogether the Aylmer finances were at a low ebb; and there was some excuse for Julie's wistful eyes and drooping lips as she gazed out into the sunlight, which could be at one and the same time a delight and a tantalizing torment.

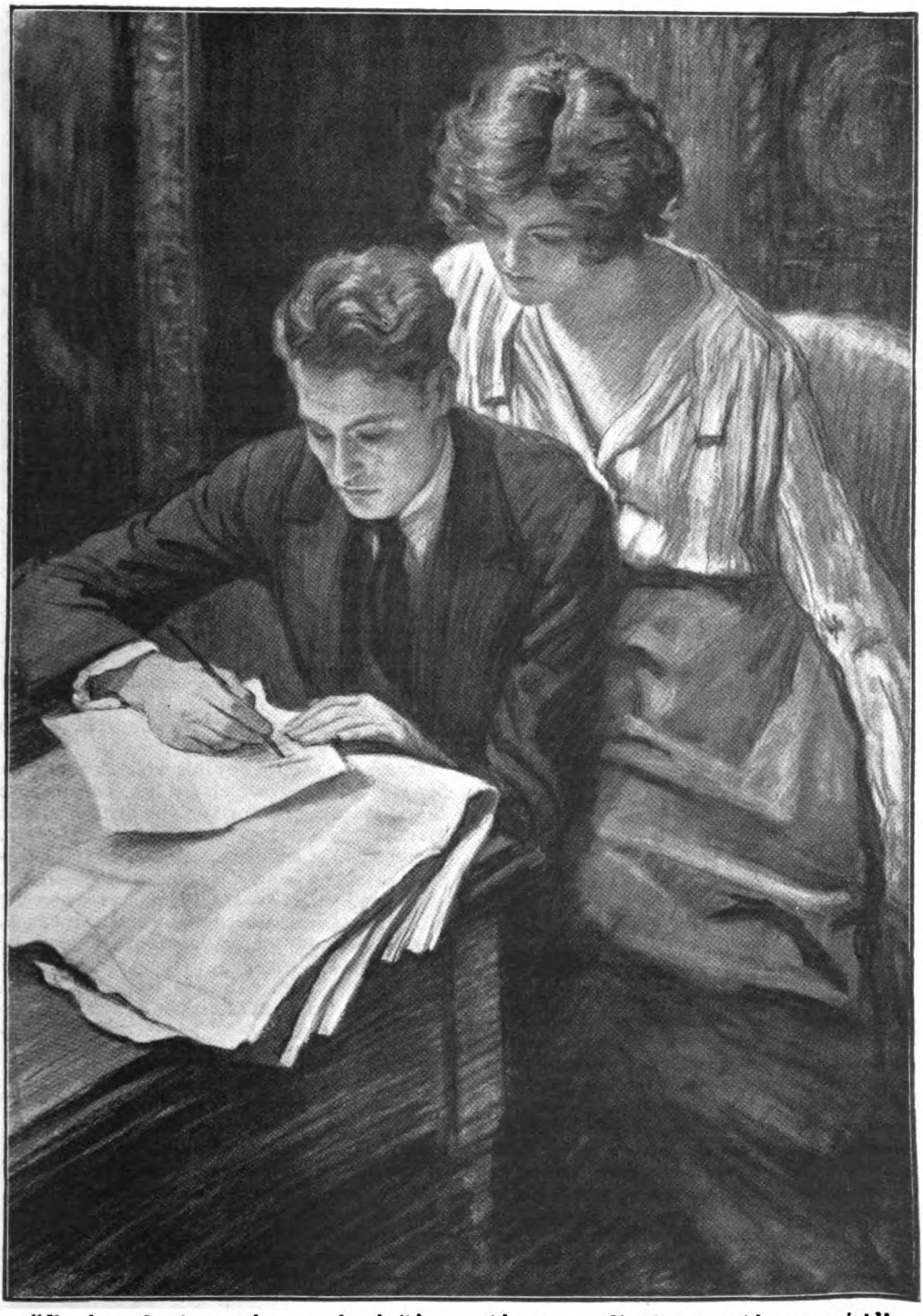
If only there were some means of escape—for a fortnight, a week! If only the long-promised holiday had been feasible after all, and had not receded, a mere phantom, into the background of their hard-working lives! But when at last the expenses of Len's illness had been met there was no margin for luxuries like travel; and consequently there could be no holiday for the Aylmers this year.

As she faced the fact for the fiftieth time Julie's grey eyes filled with tears and she gave a little sob which sounded oddly childish in the silent room. But even before the tears had found time to roll down her cheeks they were arrested in their flow and the drooping figure straightened itself proudly; for Julie's ears had caught the sound of her husband's key in the latch, and tears held no place in her scheme of things where Leonard was concerned.

She ran lightly across the room and met him in the hall; and Leonard's haggard young face brightened as he took her in his arms and kissed her hungrily.

Still entwined, they entered the little sitting-room; and Julie's eyes eagerly sought her husband's, as though she would fain read therein the result of his day's quest—so often futile!—after success.

He had been to one or two picture dealers



"I've been figuring out how much a holiday would cost us. If only we could manage it!"

to inquire after work of his left there; but one glance was enough to show Julie that so far nothing had been sold; and it was evident that nothing else had happened which could be taken to presage good fortune in the near future.

Yet one picture, at least, had been practically sold.

He was telling her about it now, in quick, jerky sentences.

"You know the picture of the Doone Valley—the one we liked so much? Old Rawlins, the soap-man, was after it, and Jacks, the dealer, said he'd give a good price. Well, to-day he went in again and *measured* it—think of it, Ju!—and because it was a couple of inches too small to fill a space on his wall he turned it down!"

"Oh, Len!" In spite of herself Julie's voice was tragic.

"Yes; and the other three—well, no one wants 'em just now." He tried to speak cheerily. "You see, so many people are out of town, and—well, all the dealers say it is hopeless expecting to sell them at this time of the year. In the autumn, when people come back to town"—he spoke optimistically—"*then's* the time to sell pictures. And I've had a promise of some pupils next term, at good fees. Oh, if we can struggle on till the autumn we'll do fine again."

"But, Len, it means no holiday—and you know you ought to go away after your illness."

She regretted her speech when she heard him sigh, saw the pallor of his thin young face, and she tried to cover up her rash words by bustling about, hastening their simple supper so that he might at least be fed after his day's fruitless toil.

But after supper, when she returned from putting away the last plate, she found him poring over a paper at the table; and, approaching softly, found he had written down some figures whose significance she understood all too well.

"Look, Ju." He drew her down on to the arm of his chair. "I've been figuring out how much a holiday would cost us, down at that delightful farmhouse by the sea where we spent our honeymoon. If only—if only we could manage it! But I'm afraid it's impossible!"

She read the figures over his shoulder:—

"'Fares, two pounds each.'" (This was in pre-war days.) "'Board and lodging, two guineas each for a fortnight.' That's just over eight pounds, isn't it?"

"Yes—and incidental expenses would bring it up to ten pounds. No, darling, I'm afraid it's quite impossible."

"Yes," she assented heroically. "We can just manage, as we are, until next term—especially if I get paid for my needlework." Julie sewed exquisitely, and now and then earned a pound or two by her work. "But I'm afraid we can't raise ten pounds for a holiday. Never mind!" She laid her cheek caressingly against his. "We've got each other—and the flat—and we can take bus-rides into the country for a treat now and then."

MUCH later that night Julie rose softly from her bed and crept on bare feet into the little sitting-room, a new and excited light in her grey eyes.

Lying awake beside the sleeping Len, for hours she had been cudgelling her brains to find a way of bringing the longed-for holiday within the bounds of possibility. In turn she had gone over all the old schemes—letting the flat, herself taking a situation as caretaker somewhere while Len went off alone in search of health and strength, appealing to this or that impecunious relative—and in the end each alternative had been perforce discarded as useless. Then, idly, she had begun to catalogue their possessions, wondering if any of the artistic, but probably valueless, furniture of the flat could be dispensed with, turned into the cash which would be of so much more use just now.

But there was nothing at all suitable for her purpose. She had no jewellery Len nothing valuable save his paints and other properties which must not be tampered with.

Stay! She had forgotten one thing—the Ming Vase.

It was the thought of this which had driven her from her bed, which led her, having first closed the door, to turn on the light and look round for the thing she sought. And there, in the place of honour on the top of the bookshelf, was the Ming Vase, her sole possession of any value, a relic from the days when her father's father had been a physician in China.

He had had many valuable possessions, handed down in turn to her father; but during the Boxer rising of 1900 the second Dr. Lucas had been forced to fly, with all his household, leaving their goods behind; and this vase was the only relic he had been able to salve from the disaster.

Julie herself did not know the exact value of the vase, nor its history. There had been a sort of legend in the family that it was of great antiquity and value, and it was generally supposed to have formed part of the booty looted from the summer palace of some emperor of a bygone dynasty; but Dr. Lucas himself did not know its story, and it had come to be known, laughingly, in the family as the "Ming Vase."

When her parents died the vase passed to Julie, who from a child had loved its beautiful shape and the wonderful colouring of its

decoration; but its possible use as a money-bringer had never struck her until this night, when all the happiness of her existence seemed to be threatened by the non-appearance of the ten pounds which meant so much to her.

Now, however, it acquired a new and definite importance in her eyes. What if it were really valuable—really capable of bringing gold to her coffers? In other words, what if she could sell it to advantage? True, it would mean a serious, an almost tragic wrench, for all the romance of her youth had been bound up in the legends which surrounded the lovely thing—yet in a crisis like this there was no time for sentiment; and if the vase meant money, then it must be sold.

Taking it down from the shelf, she turned it tenderly about in her hands, noting with a pang at her heart each well-remembered figure, each delicate, distinctive colour—blue, green, a faint delicious pink. The porcelain itself was so fine, the shape so symmetrical, while at the same time so definitely Asiatic; and the whole vase was so evidently the work of a craftsman who had gloried in his task, that for a moment Julie felt she could not bear to part with the adored thing.

Yet if indeed it could be turned into money—why, then she must not hesitate. What its actual value might be she had no idea; but in any case it should be offered for sale before many hours had passed. And by fortunate chance she knew where to offer it; for more than once in former days she had accompanied a rich school-friend to a dealer in antiques who had a delightful shop not very far from her own flat; and she had heard her friend's father testify to the business acumen and strict honesty which characterized the place; so that she felt pretty well assured that she and her vase would be safe in the hands of Mr. Goodwin.

But Leonard must know nothing of the transaction beforehand, lest he should forbid what he would guess to be a sacrifice. And, with a last look at her treasure, Julie replaced it carefully on the shelf and crept back, shivering with cold and excitement, to the bed where her husband slept, his boyish face so wan and pale in his slumber that her heart contracted within her as she gazed upon him.

"SO you believe this vase to be of value, miss—er—madam?" The speaker, a clever-looking man in the early thirties, turned the porcelain vase about in his hands with an expression of interest in his face.

"Yes. It belonged to my grandfather, who was a doctor in China. And I have always understood that it was valuable." Julie spoke quietly.

"Do you know anything of its history—its date?"

"No. We have always called it the 'Ming Vase.'" She smiled rather timidly.

"You mean it's a relic of the Ming dynasty?" His answering smile was reassuring. "Well, it's possible enough. Porcelain was known in China long before that time — thirteen hundred and something, wasn't it? And if this should be genuine——"

"But is there any doubt?" Her tone was startled.

"Well, there's always an element of doubt in these things."

"But it came from China."

"Quite so." His manner suddenly became businesslike. "Well, madam, if you'll allow me to take the vase away for a few minutes I will ask our expert's opinion as to its value. Meanwhile, please sit down—or look around you, which you prefer."

With cold hands and quickly-beating heart Julie wandered round the place, viewing with unseeing eyes the treasures of furniture and china by which she was surrounded. So much depended on the expert's decision—so much more, probably, than he realized. It had been a wrench to bring the vase here at all, for it was her only relic of an adored father. But if its loss were to bring health and a measure of prosperity to her beloved she would never regret its absence.

Five minutes passed—ten, a quarter of an hour. Then Mr. Goodwin, bearing the vase, returned; but in his face was an unmistakable look of disappointment.

"You don't want it? It isn't genuine?" She heard herself speaking, dully.

"Well, it's Chinese all right." His manner was very kind. "But our expert says it is quite certainly a modern reproduction of an older vase. He points out that the glaze is not the really genuine old glaze, and the arrangement of the figures, he says, differs slightly from the recognized old forms." He glanced at her face and went on hurriedly: "But it is very beautiful in itself, and had it been genuine it would have been worth a large sum. As it is——" He broke off suddenly, for, to his horror, the girl's eyes had filled with tears.

"It's all right." She spoke heroically, ignoring the brimming teardrops. "I—I'm not disappointed, really. I hardly expected to get any money for it; but I wanted it so badly for a holiday, that I had to try."

"One moment." He disregarded the hand she held out for the vase. "Look here, I can't help seeing this is a bit of a facer for you. Well, if you like to take the vase to some other firm, of course you can easily do so, though our expert is supposed to be about the best man in the trade where Chinese porcelain is concerned. But—it's a pretty thing, as I said before, and if you like to let

us buy it for, say, ten or twelve pounds, we will do so with pleasure."

He paused, then added, hastily :—

"It's really quite a good bargain for us—someone will no doubt buy it some day, just for its appearance, you know."

Instantly the April sunshine flashed into the girl's face, drying her tears. She had relinquished the first wild idea of obtaining hundreds of pounds for the vase with perfect calm; yet the bare idea of having ten or twelve pounds for the longed-for holiday sent her spirits soaring sky-high.

"Twelve pounds!" She clasped her hands ecstatically. "Oh, yes, of course I'd love to have it! If you only knew—that's just what I wanted for our holiday!"

"That so?" He laughed pleasantly, wondering what the expert who had appraised the value of the vase at two pounds would think of the deal. "Well, we'll settle it right away. Here"—he unlocked a drawer beside him—"I'll give you the money at once, shall I? And if you'll sign the receipt I needn't trouble you any farther."

FIVE minutes later Julie was hastening homewards with the precious money in her purse. And as she went she was concocting a story to tell her husband—for she knew he would never have consented to her sale of her treasure; and she fully intended he should enjoy his holiday without a thought of regret. Luckily for her, the midday post brought her a letter from a woman for whom she had done some of her exquisite needlework; and enclosed in the envelope was a postal order for a pound; so that the story she presently told Len, of a substantial payment received unexpectedly, accounted for several of her precious pounds, while the rest she assured him had been saved out of her housekeeping money during the bygone weeks.

"I wasn't going to tell you unless something else turned up," she informed him happily. "Four or five pounds wasn't any good, but now I've got the rest—a whole thirteen pounds, Len, think of it!—we'll have a holiday if we starve afterwards!"

"No prospect of starvation when once we get going again," said Len, gaily. "A week or two by the sea, and you shall just see how I'll work this autumn!"

* * *

THE evening before they were to start on their journey Julie received a shock.

Quite unexpectedly Leonard asked her a question :—

"Where's the Ming Vase, darling? Not broken, is it?"

"No." Keeping her scarlet face turned away from him, she answered steadily. "But as we're going away I put it in the cupboard for safety."

"Quite right." He spoke casually. "I only wondered, because I heard rather a funny story about a Chinese vase to-day. Tanner took me to lunch at his club to-day—don't know how he dared, seeing what a scarecrow I am these days!—and young Goodwin, the antique dealer-man, was there. It seems some woman brought him in a vase which she said was a genuine old thing—sounded rather like ours—and asked him to buy it. When the expert saw it, however, he said it wasn't really old, just a copy, worth a couple of quid at the outside. But the girl seemed so sick about it—evidently wanted money so badly—that Goodwin said he hadn't the heart to tell her so, and he gave her several pounds for it—out of his own pocket, I gather. Oh, he wasn't boasting; he was just saying that there was quite a lot of romance about an antique dealer's business, and he said quite openly that he sometimes got good things for a fraction of their value; so no doubt he can afford to pay for fakes sometimes."

He rose from the table and threw away his cigarette.

"Well, old girl, let's get on with the job. You look fearfully tired to-night—you sit and rest a little, and I'll finish the packing."

But Julie refused his offer quietly, and continued her preparations for the holiday which now seemed to her something shameful, a penance rather than a delight.

For she never doubted that it was her vase for which Mr. Goodwin had paid six times its price—out of charity, out of pity for her because she had looked so poverty-stricken, so desperately in need of his money.

All her life Julie would remember that fortnight in Devonshire with feelings of shuddering distaste.

The thought of the money which had paid for it poisoned every moment of the beautiful summer days. Even as she swam beside her husband through the clear sea-water, or sat with him on the green turf of the cliffs overlooking the expanse of vivid blue ocean many feet below, she remembered the moment when Mr. Goodwin, mockingly charitable, or so it seemed to her now, had handed her the money which had meant then so much to her. While Len ate and drank, sang and shouted and slept, beside himself with joy at this release from stuffy Chelsea to glorious Devonshire, she moved by his side as one in a dream. Although the hot sun coloured her fair skin, brought out the gleams in her honey-tinted hair, the light in her grey eyes, so that she looked a different being from the pale girl who had stifled in a London flat, she felt that it was in reality only the simulacrum

"'Well, madam, if you'll allow me to take the vase away for a few minutes I will ask our expert's opinion as to its value.'"

of a woman who walked beside the handsome, glowing youth who was her husband.

For Leonard knew nothing of the conflict which raged within her soul. To sell her precious vase had been bad enough, but to know that it had been practically valueless, that she owed its price to a kind-hearted stranger's generosity, stung Julie's soul to the quick.

On one thing only was she resolved—to buy back the vase; or if that were not possible, at least to pay the difference to the man who had bought it from her. She did not know how she was to save the sum out of her meagre allowance, without stinting her beloved Leonard; yet she was resolved to do it; and only then, so she told herself, would she feel able to look the world of men in the face—and to look her husband in the face. For—and here, perhaps, lay the sting of the whole—it was not she alone who had benefited by the man's kindness. It was as though some unseen hand had stabbed her husband in the back, as though his temporary inability to make good had given this meddling stranger the opportunity of entering, with his carelessly bestowed largesse, into the lives of the two who were in reality nothing, less than nothing, to him.

And until the money were paid back Julie knew that she would feel herself a traitor to her best-beloved, as though she were keeping him in the dark about vital matters which it was right he should know, so that he should not benefit blindly by the charity of another man.

It was really better when they were back in town, when she could begin again to save and scrape, to hoard the few miserable coins, to sew herself nearly blind over the beautiful needlework which was, after all, not badly paid. Luckily, Len was out nearly all day teaching, or working in a friend's studio, and she was able to stint herself in food and comfort to her heart's content. Shilling by shilling she made up the sum—luckily there had been a little surplus left after their holiday had been paid for, and these few pounds, pressed on her by Len, made a fair nucleus for the whole; and by dint of almost superhuman efforts she had saved the required amount by the middle of October—though at what a cost to herself her pale cheeks, lack-lustre eyes, and thin figure showed only too plainly.

ON a frosty autumn morning young Mr. Goodwin was informed that a lady wished to see him respecting a certain Ming Vase sold to him some months previously.

Young Mr. Goodwin was reading his paper very comfortably over a fragrant cigar; but he flung down the sheet impatiently at the announcement.

"The Ming Vase! Not the same lady, Jones? By Jove, here's luck! Of course I'll see her—at once. Better bring her in here, and look sharp about it, too."

A moment later Julie entered the private office; and as he rose to greet her Mr. Goodwin looked at her sharply, wondering whether this pale, hollow-cheeked girl were indeed the one from whom he had purchased the Ming Vase earlier in the year.

But when she spoke he doubted her identity no longer.

"Mr. Goodwin, I have brought you back the money you paid for the Chinese vase." She was holding out a little package as she spoke the words. "I learned, later, that the vase was valueless, and that you—you had given me the money out of—of kindness. I spent it—I had to—but I'd like, please, to give you this. There is only ten pounds, so I can't get back the vase—but you said it was worth two pounds, and I'll feel better if you will kindly take the money." Her voice faltered a little in the end.

Inwardly Mr. Goodwin was wondering how on earth she had learnt of his indiscreet confidences at his club; but outwardly he was strangely jubilant.

"My dear lady—may I ask your name? I couldn't read it on the receipt, unfortunately! —Mrs. Aylmer? Well, Mrs. Aylmer, I can't tell you how glad I am you have called. I've a strange story to tell you about the vase; but first, won't you sit down? You look pale."

She did not accept the invitation, standing in front of him with her eyes fixed on his face; and he had perforce to stand to finish his tale.

"As you know, the expert we employed said your vase was a modern imitation, and therefore of small value. Well—he lied." For a moment his face was grim. "It seems that he had seen at once that it was a genuine piece of work of the earlier Ming dynasty; and being himself an ardent collector he made an infamous resolve to belittle its value to me with a design of purchasing it himself later at a merely nominal sum. To that end he advised me to offer you a couple of pounds for it on account of its shape and colour. Well, as you know, I made you a slightly larger offer"—for the first time for years Mr. Goodwin found himself blushing—"and I put the vase aside, thinking no more of the matter for some time."

"But he—your expert?" In spite of herself the girl was thrilled.

"He craftily decided to leave the thing alone for a few weeks, lest his undue eagerness to purchase should give him away, so to speak; and he went off for his holiday quite

happy in his mind about the vase. But while he was away "—Mr. Goodwin spoke impressively—" by a strange coincidence the one man in England who knows more about Chinese porcelain than even our expert came into the place one day, just as I was looking casually at your vase. Well, to cut a long story short, this man, Lord Sowerby, who has lived many years in China, recognized the vase as one formerly well known to collectors as an almost perfect specimen of its period; and without waiting to hear its history he offered, then and there, to purchase it from me for a sum of two thousand pounds."

"*Two thousand pounds?*"

"Yes. On hearing the story he instantly guessed the expert's game—which, by the way, the man owned up to, later—and he also insisted that you, as the original owner, should be informed of the discovery. Naturally "—Mr. Goodwin smiled—" I wouldn't have taken advantage of your ignorance on the subject to do you out of the vase—and the money! And I was only too anxious to apprise you of your good fortune. But" —he shrugged his shoulders—" well, I had been unbusiness-like enough to omit to ask for your address; and owing to the haste with which you had signed the receipt"—Julie blushed at the recollection of her own anxiety to clinch the matter—" it was quite impossible to make out your name. So beyond dismissing the expert from the firm, we have so far done nothing, though the question of advertising for you had been mooted between us."

"You mean that it—the vase—is worth two thousand pounds?" Her voice came sobbingly through her pale lips. "But—in any case—it's yours now—you bought it."

"My dear lady!" Mr. Goodwin waved a deprecating hand. "Do you think we are all as unscrupulous as the wretched man who deceived us as to the value of the vase? Of course it is still your property, especially"—he smiled—" as you have apparently bought it back again! Now, if you will allow me to advise you, you will close with Lord Sowerby's offer. Of course you can have the vase valued elsewhere if you like; but, really, I don't think you need doubt Lord Sowerby's honesty."

"No," she said, quietly, though an odd little smile touched the corner of her lips, "I don't think I need doubt anyone's honesty—not even my own!"

THE Ming Vase occupies an honoured place in Lord Sowerby's cherished collection of Chinese porcelain; and to his connoisseur friends he is never tired of telling the odd story of its purchase.

The rising young painter, Leonard Aylmer, and his pretty young wife still live in Chelsea, though their flat is more comfortable and holidays are more frequent than of old. On the bookshelf in the sitting-room there is only one ornament, a quaint, goggle-eyed cat in coarse West of England pottery—a souvenir of a holiday in Devonshire which was, so Julie declares, the turning-point in their fortunes.

Until the happy ending of the Ming Vase episode she had not the heart to look at the cat which Leonard had bought her on the last day of their stay in the village by the sea—for it reminded her of so much she would fain forget.

But when the Ming Vase, duly paid for, had taken its place in Lord Sowerby's collection, Julie took the queer pottery cat from the deep drawer to which she had consigned it, and placed it triumphantly on the vacant top of the bookshelf.

For, as she said in eager justification of her action, "It's the only possible successor to the Ming Vase!" And Leonard laughed and agreed with her.

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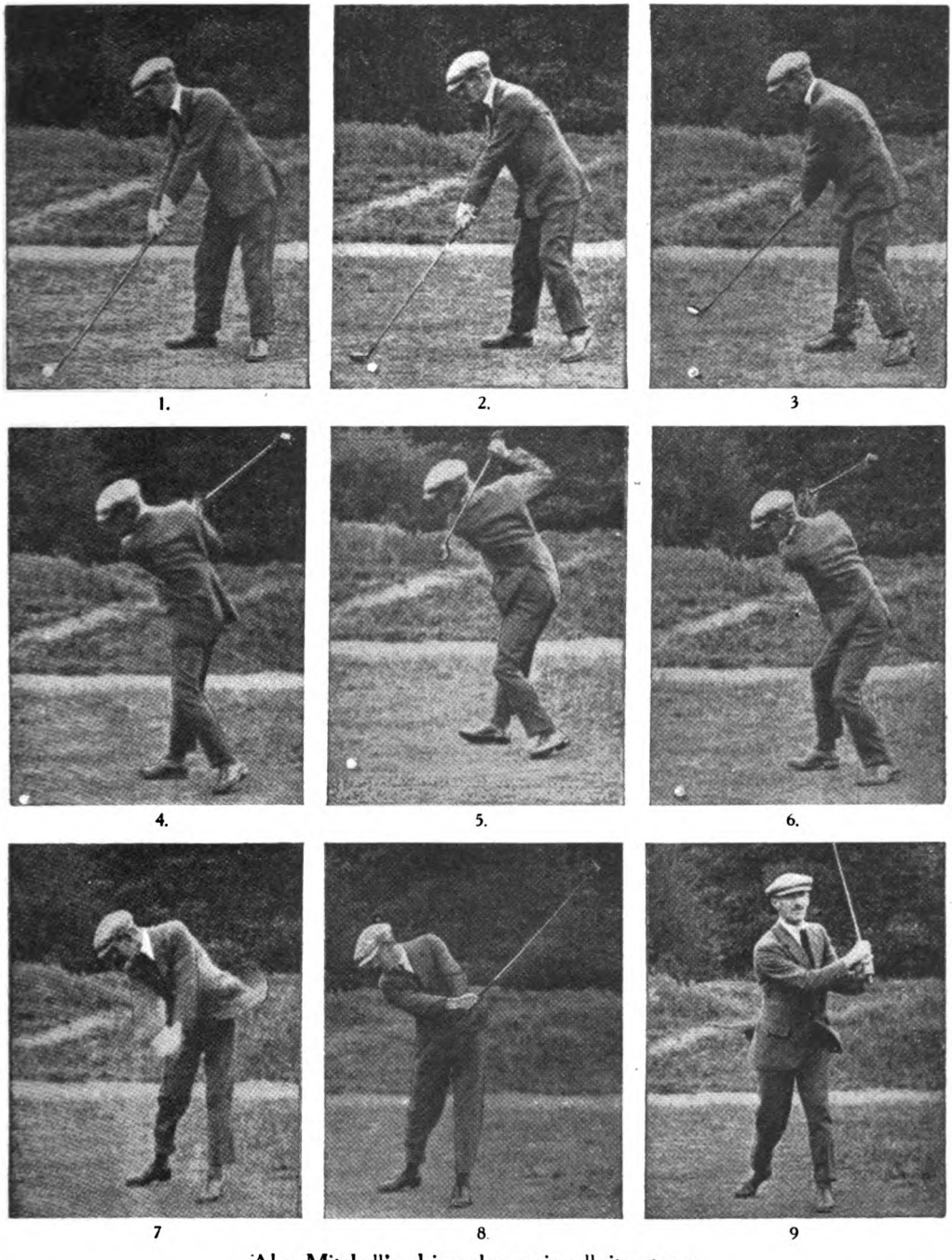
WHEN I grow rich I mean to have my own private cinematograph to depict me playing golf. My motive will not be vanity, but a humble desire for improvement. I shall have myself "filmed" when I am playing what I please to call well, and also when I am playing ill, for which there will be ample opportunity. I shall be taken with all my clubs in turn. Then whenever I am "off it" with any one of them—and to be off with at least one club is the golfer's normal condition—I shall compare the happy and unhappy pictures of myself, and try to draw from them an improving moral.

I see at present no prospect of this indulgence, but I am quite sure that it would be an excellent plan for any ambitious and introspective golfer. We cannot see ourselves and our contortions. A looking-glass is of little use if only because, instead of looking at the ball, we have to look at the glass, and this movement of the head completely dislocates and alters the swing. It is extraordinarily difficult for any coach, however skilful, to describe to us in words our precise error. He may accomplish something by mimicry, but he cannot be so faithful a mimic as the cinematograph, nor can be made to go through his performance over and over again and at any desired pace. If we try to doctor our own golfing ailments our diagnosis is often ludicrously wrong. Sometimes we fancy the fault to be the very opposite of what it really is, and so only plunge deeper and deeper. The cinematograph would not make this mistake, and it might often reveal to us the eluding secret of that dreadful little hitch in the swing that we feel but can never locate. It is so easy to know that we are moving our bodies too much: so hard to say at what point the wrong movement intrudes itself.

I long since conceived this ambition for my own cinematograph. I feel it much more strongly now that I have studied the pictures by which this article is illustrated, and have also enjoyed a show of them in motion given for my especial benefit. This enjoyment is denied to the reader, but the series of pictures makes an excellent substitute, and has this actual advantage, that he can take the stroke at any particular stage and study it minutely and as long as he likes.

The pictures actually in motion I found entertaining as well as instructive, and when the movement was very slow indeed they were amusing in one respect that I had not anticipated. Shown at the usual speed, the player comes bustling up to his ball, tees it, and takes his club from the caddie with a brisk and business-like air. At dead-slow speed, however (I do not know the technical terms), he is entirely changed. Now he comes prowling and creeping up to it. He is infinitely stealthy and slinking, and looks as if he were going to make a grab at it and then run away. This stealthiness was especially marked in the pictures in which Harry Vardon shows exactly how he grips his club. As his right hand comes slowly, slowly up to take its place, it looks full of wickedness, as if it should be grasping a stiletto. When the picture of a putt is taken very slowly the ball slithers along the ground for all the world like a snail. The



Abe Mitchell's drive shown in all its stages.

It will be noticed that in picture No. 7, which shows Mitchell at the moment of hitting the ball, the club has left no impression on the film.

waggle at the same speed is extraordinarily absurd. It so chanced that the first picture, as to which I asked the operator to go very slowly, was one of Sandy Herd driving. That illustrious player is, as is well known, a man of many and ferocious waggles : rapid

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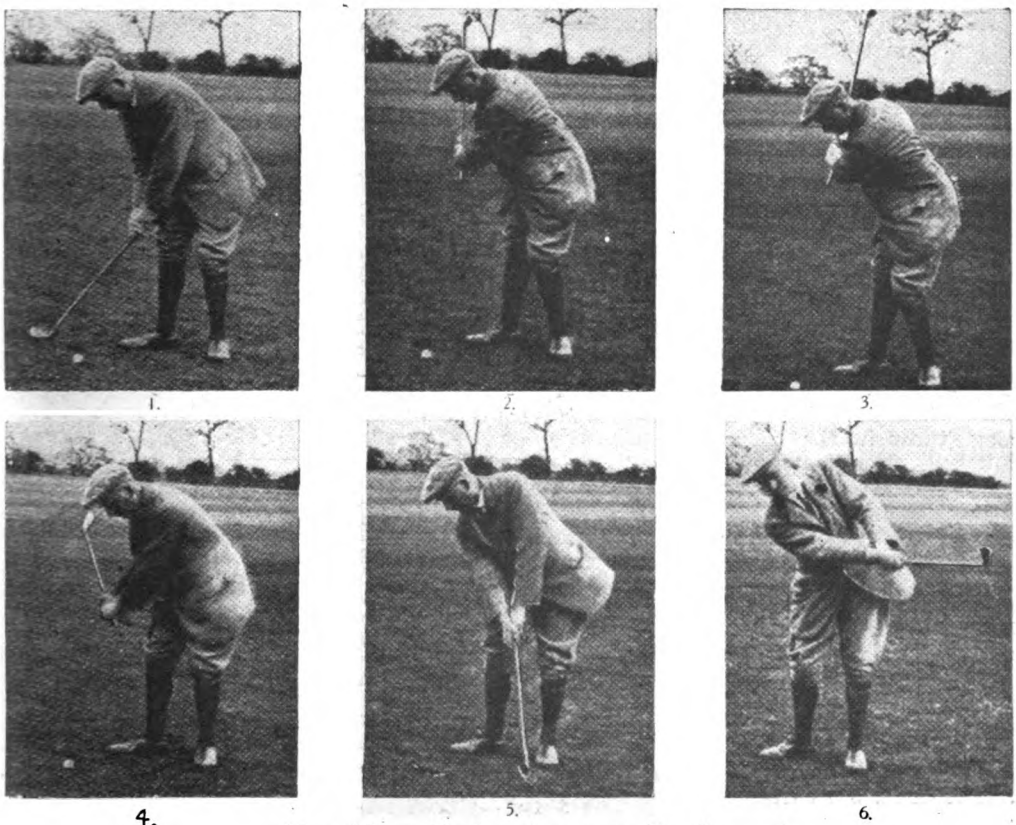
Harry Vardon's drive—"beautifully compact and beautifully free."



How Harry Vardon plays a mashie shot.

arithmeticians have counted him well into double figures. When they are taken not at the rate of a hunt but that of a funeral, one begins to doubt whether Herd will ever really get to business.

In choosing the best pictures—in each case from a very long roll—I have tried to illustrate certain phases of the stroke, which pass so quickly that in real life we cannot see them. For example, the first few inches of the upward swing, half-way down, and the actual moment of striking. There were many more pictures to choose from in the upward than in the downward swing. The club comes down so rapidly that in some cases I chose three consecutive pictures, and yet each showed a perfectly distinct stage. Perhaps this is a rather obvious remark, but it is worth emphasizing the fact that good players go up very much more slowly than they come down. Alas! this is not so with all of us. We are apt to go up with so sharp a jerk that we have no pace left to come down with.

The pictures of Abe Mitchell driving will probably be the most eagerly examined by the student of style. Not only is Mitchell one of the two outstanding golfers of the moment, and one of the two or three longest drivers in the world, but his is a style at once of glaring heterodoxy and fascinating mystery. Nobody else can make the club

The "Vardon" grip, which is now the almost universal grip of the professionals, and is used by many amateurs.

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Edward Ray shares with Abe Mitchell the distinction of exactly how he

sing through the air like Mitchell. Nor, I think, is it fanciful to say that the crack of his club meeting the ball has a different note from that of all the other drivers. He makes his club travel at this desperate pace in a way all his own by nipping the club into his side and checking that follow through which we have all been brought up to regard as sacred. And he does these unorthodox things deliberately and unashamedly, and preaches the curtailment of the follow through.

The first thing that strikes us in the picture of Mitchell about to start his swing is the pronounced arch of the left wrist. Other players have this characteristic to some extent, but none so markedly as he. In his written analysis of his own methods he sets great store by it. Yet, as far as we can see, this arch very soon disappears in the taking back of the club. There is a splendid vigour about the top of the swing. The right elbow is noticeably free and clear of the body, though not of course lifted high in the air, as the older authorities used to advocate. It is rather a long swing, as swings go nowadays, for the club has been taken well past the horizontal, but there is certainly no appearance of a loss of control. Now let us look at the critical moment of the actual stroke. The feet are perfectly firm on the ground, and that is a point to be noticed in all the professionals' strokes, and to be taken to heart by amateurs. No man can hit hard and truly who is not firmly balanced at the moment of striking. That which rivets our attention, however, is the movement of the right wrist. Clearly the club face must have been at right angles to the line of flight at the time of impact, but see how an almost inappreciable fraction of time afterwards the right wrist comes whipping over. It obscures the left wrist altogether, and the left arm seems never to go away from the left side. When we watch Mitchell in real life we sometimes imagine that the quickness of the movement has deceived us and that the arms and the club really go through farther than they appear to do. But the pictures show that this is not so. After that one tremendous flash of the wrists very little seems to happen. The whole attitude gradually eases up and becomes less taut, but the arms and club cling to the left side, the hands do not go round and over the left shoulder, or anything like it. It is a style of wonderful power and fascination, but it is not, I think, one for the ordinary mortal to copy unless he wishes to alternate between a smothered hook and a slice over cover-point's head. It is wisest to regard Mitchell as a genius and a law to himself.

The other two driving pictures show the

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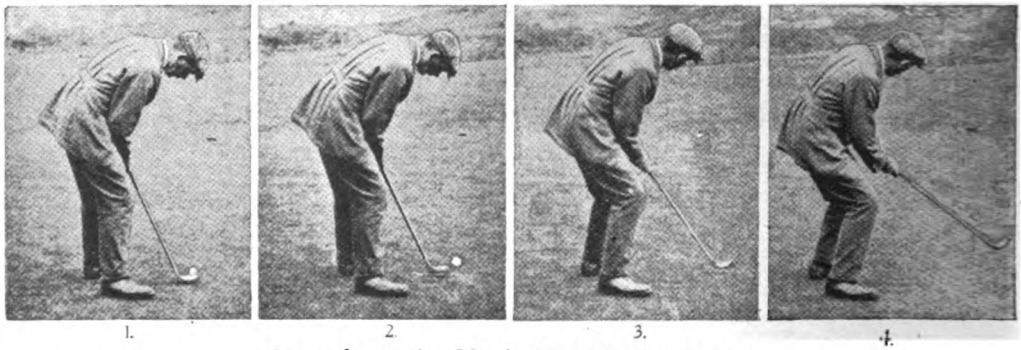
being one of the longest drivers in the world—here is shown plays the shot.

two great Jersey golfers, Vardon and Ray. Vardon's style has been photographed and picked to pieces many times, and is tolerably familiar to most golfers. It is at once beautifully compact and beautifully free. Twenty-one years ago, in almost the first book in which analysis of golfing methods from photographs was seriously attempted, Mr. Horace Hutchinson wrote this : "I should say that if a man knew his common error and besetting sin to be a too wild swinging with the arms without sufficient movement of the body, too much arm work and arm hitting, too little help from the body turn, an excellent remedy would be for him to study again and again, with purposes of some degree of imitation, the swing of Harry Vardon." This remains to-day truly excellent advice, if a little hard to follow. It is something like that very familiar piece of encouragement, "Go in and win." Duncan, we know, remodelled his style when he first saw Vardon, and there are now a good many points of similarity between the two styles. Mr. A. C. Lincoln, of Totteridge, a very fine golfer too little seen in public nowadays, has a good deal of his master's manner. But generally speaking Vardon has remained unimitated because inimitable. Bits of his style may be reproduced, but the wonderful smoothness and rhythm which, so to speak, welds all the bits together, defeats the golfer who would "play the sedulous ape" to him. The pictures give a good idea of that perfect smoothness and of the firmness of foot and economy of movement which help to produce it. Apart from the rhythmical whole, the one separate bit, as I have called it, that we can see, is the fact of the hands leading the way in the back swing. It is an accepted fact that Vardon does begin his swing in this way, though when he is actually playing it is very hard to see exactly what really happens. Here in the picture we distinctly see the hands leading, though very modestly and unobtrusively. Let the admiring imitator beware of exaggerating the movement, as he is almost sure to do.

The pictures in which Vardon shows how he grips the club have already been spoken of. The "Vardon grip" is now the almost universal grip of the professionals and is used by many amateurs. Everybody who tries it, however, does not get it quite right. These pictures show how perfectly in Vardon's case the hands fit into one another. I might almost say that he screws them one into the other, so that there is no cranny of intervening daylight nor any scope for loosening or slipping.

Ray driving we watch from a different angle. In the other pictures we are standing



A good putt by Herd shown in four stages.

more or less opposite the player. In Ray's case we are standing behind him. In the first of the series Ray is in the act of waggling, and I chose this one as showing a little point that is curious rather than positively instructive. He seems to do quite different things when waggling the club than when he is beginning the actual swing. In the waggle the hands and arms are well out from the body, and the club face turned sharply away from the line. When he begins the swing, the face of the club is not so " open " ; the arms are kept well in and soon begin, if I may so express it, to climb round the body. We may see here, too, a suggestion of the hands leading the way. Once the club is well on its road there is an impression of enormous power, which grows more and more marked to the end. The last of all, showing the finish of the follow through, is a very fine picture, and the complete turn of the body and feet towards the hole is worthy of the highest praise. Ray is not always quite so steady on his feet as are some others, and in certain moods he has an odd habit of moving his right foot forward and outward just after the ball is struck, as if he had toppled over ever so slightly under the force of his own blow. On this occasion, however, his feet seem to have been on their very best behaviour.

Vardon's mashie shot is as graceful and easy as is every other stroke that he plays (save only those wretched short putts on his bad days). The complete stability of his feet is particularly noticeable. Vardon is never a player who comes down very severely on the turf and sends a big divot hurtling through the air, to the sorrow of the greenkeeper. He is too smooth for that. His club seems rather to pick the ball up and carry it away like a bird, and I think there is a suggestion of this in the photograph.

THE pictures of Herd putting were rather difficult to choose. I despairingly unrolled a long coil of pictures, each of which showed Herd and his club apparently in the same position. In fact, the only change visible in them is that in each successive one the ball " seems here some painful inch to gain," and creeps nearer and ever nearer to the hole. But if not precisely exciting, this series has a distinct educational value as showing how intensely important it is in putting to keep the body still. To be sure, we all know that, but it cannot be rubbed into us too hard or too often. It is only when the ball is on the point of disappearing into the hole that Herd gives a tiny duck of his knees, as if to say " Go in, you beast ! " and then down go the knees still a little lower to say " That's that ! " I wish the artist could have caught Herd when he thinks that the ball is not quite going to reach the hole, for at such moments he urges it on with the most dramatic gesticulations and wavings of his club. And really I think the ball must be afraid of him, for it is wonderful how often it just reaches the hole at its very last gasp. Herd is a very good putter, who likes keen greens where he can coax the ball to trickle in ; the back of the tin and mere bludgeoning methods do not appeal to him.

Here end the pictures, and I hope that many golfers may draw from them many useful morals. If I had to draw just one moral from them all, it should be the one that I have already emphasized : " Stand still." It is a very old one, as old as golf itself, but none the worse for that. Keep everything as still as you can, more especially the head, for on that everything else to a large extent depends. There is, I think, no other point in which the professional so steadily excels the amateur.

Without Prejudice

by

ETHEL M. DELL

ILLUSTRATED BY
W. R. S. STOTT

PART III.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MEETING.

THE two girls left the billiard-room, shepherded by Fletcher, almost before the tumult had subsided. It seemed to Dot that he was anxious about something and desirous to get them away. But Adela was full of excited comments and refused to be hurried, stopping outside to question Hill upon a dozen points regarding the game while he stood stiffly responding, waiting to say good night.

Dot leaned upon the stair-rail, waiting for her, and eventually Fletcher drew Adela's attention to the fact.

Adela laughed. "Oh, that's just her way, my dear Fletcher. Some women were born to wait. Dot does it better than anyone I know."

It was at that moment that Warden came quietly up the passage from the billiard-room, moving with the lightness of well-knit muscles, and checked himself at sight of Fletcher.

"I should like a word with you—when you have time," he said.

Adela swooped upon him with effusion. "Mr. Warden! Your play is simply astounding. Allow me to congratulate you!"

"Please don't!" said Warden. "I played atrociously."

She laughed at him archly. "That's just your modesty. You're plainly a champion. Now, when are you going to let Mr. Hill show us that wonderful mine? We are dying to see it, aren't we, Dot?"

"The mine!" Warden turned sharply to Hill. "You're not going to take anyone over that—surely! Not in person—anyhow! What, sir?" He looked hard at Hill, who said nothing. "Then you must be mad!"

"He isn't obliged to go in person," smiled Adela. "I am sure you are big enough to take care of us single-handed. Dot and I are not in the least nervous. Will you take us alone if we promise not to tease the animals?"

Warden's eyes flashed a sudden glance upwards to the girl who still stood silently leaning upon the rail. It was almost like an appeal.

As if involuntarily she spoke. "What is the danger?"

Hill turned to her. "There is no danger," he said, curtly. "If you wish to go, I will take you to-morrow."

Warden made a brief gesture as of one who submits to the inevitable, and turned away.

Fletcher held out his hand to Adela with finality. "Good night," he said.

"Are you really going to take us to-morrow?" she said.

"Yes," said Fletcher.

She beamed upon him. "What time shall we be ready?"

He did not refer to Dot. "At five o'clock," he said. "I shall be busy at the court all day. I will come and fetch you."

He shook hands with Dot, and his face softened. "Good night," he said. "Go to bed quickly! You're very tired."

She gave him a fleeting smile, and turned to go. She was tired to the soul.

Adela caught her by the arm as they

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ascended the stairs. "You little quiet mouse, what's the matter? Aren't you enjoying the adventure?"

Dot's face was sombre. "I think I am too tired to enjoy anything to-night," she said.

"Tired! And no work to do! Why, what has come to you?" Adela surveyed her with laughing criticism.

"Let's go to bed!" said Dot. "I'll tell you when we get there."

Something in tone or words stirred Adela. She refrained from further bantering and gave her mind to speedy preparations for bed.

Then, as at last they were about to separate, she put a warm arm about the girl and held her close. "What is it? Aren't you happy?" she said.

A great sob went through Dot. Her trouble was more than she could bear. She clung to Adela with unaccustomed closeness.

"I've promised to marry Fletcher at the end of the week—instead of going back with you to the farm."

"I thought that was what he was after," said Adela. "But—don't you want to?"

"No," whispered Dot, trembling.

"Well, why don't you tell him so—tell him he's got to wait? Shall I tell him for you, you poor little thing?" Adela's voice was full of compassion.

But Dot was instant in her refusal. "No, oh, no! Don't tell him! I—I couldn't give him—any particular reason for waiting. I shall feel better—I'm sure I shall feel better—when it's over."

"I expect you will," said Adela. "But I don't like you being miserable. I say, Dot ——"—she clasped the quivering form closer, with a sudden rare flash of intuition—"there isn't—anyone else you like better, is there?"

But at that Dot started as if she had been stung, and drew herself swiftly away. "Oh, no!" she said, vehemently. "No—no—no!"

"Then I shouldn't worry," said Adela, sensibly. "It's nothing but nerves."

She kissed her and went to her own room, where she speedily slept. But Dot lay wide-eyed, unresting, while the hours crawled by, seeing only the vivid blue eyes that had looked into hers, and thrilled her—and thrilled her with their magic.

IN the morning she arose early, urged by a fevered restlessness that drove her with relentless force. Dressing, she discovered the loss of a little heart-shaped brooch, Jack's gift, which she always wore.

Adela, still lying in bed, assured her that she had seen it in her dress the previous evening while at dinner. "It probably came out in that little conservatory place when Fletcher was embracing you," she said.

"Not very likely, I think," said Dot, flushing.

Nevertheless, since she valued it, she finished dressing in haste and departed to search for it.

There was no one about with the exception of a man who was cleaning up the billiard-room and assured her that her property was not there. So she passed on along the passage to the shabby little glass-house whither she and Fletcher had retreated on the previous evening.

She expected to find the place deserted, and was surprised by a whiff of tobacco-smoke as she entered. The next moment sharply she drew back; for a man's figure rose up from the seat under the billiard-room window on which she had rested the previous evening. His great frame seemed to fill the place. Dot turned to flee.

But on the instant he spoke, checking her. "Don't go for a moment! I know what you're looking for. It's that little heart of yours. I've got it here."

She paused almost in spite of herself. His voice was pitched very low. He spoke to her as if he were speaking to a frightened child. And he smiled at her with the words—a frank and kindly smile.

"You—you found it!" she stammered.

"Yes, I found it, Miss Burton." He lingered over the name half unconsciously, and a poignant stab of memory went through her. So had he uttered it on that day so long, so long ago! "I knew it was yours. I was trying to bring myself to give it to Mr. Hill."

"How did you know it was mine?" She almost whispered the words, yet she drew nearer to him, drawn irresistibly—drawn as a needle to the magnet.

He answered her also under his breath. "I—remembered."

She felt as if a wave of fire had swept over her. She swayed a little, throbbing from head to foot.

"I have rather a good memory," he said, as she found no words. "You're not—vexed with me on that account, I hope?"

An odd touch of wistfulness in his voice brought her eyes up to his face. She fought for speech and answered him.

"Of course not! Why should I? It—is a very long time ago, isn't it?"

"Centuries," said Warden, and smiled again upon her reassuringly. "But I never forgot you and your little farm and the old dog. Have you still got him?"

She nodded, her eyes lowered, a choked feeling as of tears in her throat.

"He'd remember me," said Warden, with confidence. "He was a friend. Do you know that was one of the most hairbreadth escapes of my life? If Fletcher Hill had

caught me, he wouldn't have shown much mercy—any more than he would now," he added, with a half-laugh. "He's a terrific man for justice."

"Surely you're safe—now!" Dot said, quickly.

"If you don't give me away," said Warden.

"I!" She started, almost winced. "There's no danger of that," she said, in a low voice.

"Thank you," he said. "I've gone fairly straight ever since. It hasn't been a very paying game. I tried my luck in the West, but it was right out. So I thought I'd come back here, and that was the turning-point. They took me on at the Fortescue Mine. It's a fiendish place, but I rather like it. I'm sub-manager there at present—till Harley goes."

"Ah!" She looked up at him again. "He is a dangerous man. He hates you, doesn't he?"

"Quite possibly," said Warden, with a smile. "That mine is rather an abode of hate all round. But we'll clean it out one of these days, and make a decent place of it."

"I hope you will succeed," she said, very earnestly.

"Thank you," he said again.

He was looking at her speculatively, as if there were something about her that he found hard to understand. Her agitation had subsided, leaving her with a piteous, forlorn look—the look of the wayfarer who is almost too tired to go any farther.

There fell a brief silence between them, then with a little smile she spoke.

"Are you going to give me back my brooch?"

He put his hand in his pocket. "I was nearly keeping it for good and all," he said, as he brought it out.

She took it from him and pinned it in her dress without words. Then, shyly, she proffered her hand. "Thank you. Good-bye!"

He drew a short hard breath as he took it into his own. For a second or two he stood so, absolutely motionless, his great hand grasping hers. Then, very suddenly, he stooped to her, looking into her eyes.

"Good-bye, little new chum!" he said, softly. "It was—decent of you to treat me—without prejudice."

The words pierced her. A great tremor went through her. For an instant the pain was almost intolerable.

"Oh, spare me that!" she said, quickly and passionately, and drew her hand away.

The next moment she was running blindly through the passage, scarcely knowing which way she went, intent only upon escape.

A man at the foot of the stairs stood aside for her, and she fled past him without a glance. He turned and watched her with keen, alert eyes till she was out of sight. Then, without haste, he took his way in the direction whence she had come.

But he did not go beyond the threshold of the little dusty conservatory, for something he saw within made him draw swiftly back.

When Fletcher Hill went to the court that day, he was grimmer, colder, more unapproachable even than was his wont. He had to deal with one or two minor cases from the gold mine, and the treatment he meted out was of as severe an order as circumstances would permit.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MINE.

THE Fortescue Gold Mine was five miles away from Trelevan, in the heart of wild, barren country, through which the sound of its great crushing machines whirred perpetually like the droning of an immense beehive.

The place was strewn with scattered huts belonging to such of the workers as did not live at Trelevan, and a yellow stream ran foaming through the valley, crossed here and there by primitive wooden bridges.

The desolation of the whole scene, save for that running stream, produced the effect of a world burnt out. The hills of shale might have been vast heaps of ashes. It was a waste place of terrible unfruitfulness. And yet, not very far below the surface, the precious metal lay buried in the rock—the secret of the centuries which man at last had wrenched from its hiding-place.

The story went that Fortescue, the owner of the mine, had made his discovery by a mere accident in this place known as the Barren Valley, and had kept it to himself for years thereafter because he lacked the means to exploit it. But later he had returned with the necessary capital at his back, had staked his claim, and turned the place of desolation into an abode of roaring activity. The men he employed were for the most part drawn from the dregs—sheep-stealers, cattle-thieves, smugglers, many of them ex-convicts—a fierce, unruly lot, hating all law and order, yet submitting for the sake of that same precious yellow dust that they ground from the foundation stones of the world.

Personally, Fortescue was known but to the very few, but his methods were known to all. He paid them generously, but he ruled them with a rigid discipline that knew no relaxation. It was murmured that Fletcher Hill—the hated police-magistrate—was at his back, for he never failed to visit the mine when his duty took him in that direction, and there was something of military precision in its management which

was strongly reminiscent of his forbidding personality. It was Fletcher Hill who meted out punishment to the transgressors who were brought before him at the police-court at Trelevan, and his treatment was usually swift and unsparing. No prisoner ever expected mercy from him.

He was hated at the mine with a fierce hatred, in which Fortescue had but a very minor share. It was recognized that Fortescue's methods were of a decent order, though his lack of personal interest was resented, and also his friendship with Fletcher Hill, which some even declared to be a partnership. The only point in his favour was the fact that Bill Warden knew the man and never failed to stand up for him. For some reason Warden possessed an enormous influence over the men. His elevation to the sub-managership had been highly popular, and his projected promotion to the post of manager, now filled by Harley, gave them immense satisfaction. He had the instincts of a sportsman and knew how to handle them, and a personality that was certainly magnetic did the rest.

Harley had a certain following, but the general feeling towards him was one of contempt. Most men recognized that he was nothing but a self-seeker, and there were few who trusted him. He did his best to achieve popularity, but his efforts were too obvious. Bill Warden's breezy indifference held an infinitely greater appeal in the eyes of the crowd.

Harley's resignation was of his own choosing. He declared himself in need of a rest, and no one attempted to persuade him otherwise. His day was over, and Warden's succession to the post seemed an inevitable sequence. As Hill sardonically remarked, there was no other competitor for the chieftainship of that band of cutthroats.

For some reason he had postponed his departure till after Hill's official visit to Trelevan. He and Warden shared the largest house in the miners' colony in Barren Valley. It was close to the mine at the end of the valley, and part of it was used as the manager's office. It overlooked the yellow torrent and the black wall of mountain beyond—a savage prospect that might have been hewn from the crater of a dead volcano.

A rough track led to it, winding some twenty feet above the stream, and up this track Fletcher Hill drove the two visitors on the evening of the day succeeding their arrival at Trelevan.

There was a deadness of atmosphere between those rocky walls that struck chill even to Adela's inconsequent soul. "What a ghastly place!" she commented. "I should think Ezekiel's valley of dry bones must have been something like this."

HARLEY met them at the door of his office with a smile in his crafty eyes. "Warden is waiting for you in the mine," he said to Fletcher. "His lambs have been a bit restless this afternoon. He has set his heart on a full-dress parade, but I don't know if it will come off."

Fletcher's black brows drew together. "What do you mean by that?" he demanded.

Harley shrugged his shoulders with a laugh. "You wait and see!"

The entrance to the mine yawned like an immense cavern in the rock. The roaring screech of the machines issuing from it made an inferno of sound from which, involuntarily, Dot shrank.

She looked at Hill appealingly as they drew near. He turned instantly to Harley.

"Go ahead, will you, and tell them to stop work? We can't hear ourselves speak in this."

"I'll come with you, Mr. Harley," said Adela, promptly. "I want to see the machines going."

Harley paused for a moment. "You know your way, Mr. Hill?" he said.

Hill nodded with a hint of impatience. "Yes, yes. I was here only the other day."

"Very good," said Harley. "But don't forget to turn to the right when you get down the steps. The other way is too steep for ladies."

He was gone with the words and Adela with him, openly delighted to have escaped from her solemn escort, and ready for any adventure that might present itself.

Dot looked after her for a moment, and then back at Hill. "She'll be all right, won't she?" she asked.

"Of course she will!" said Hill.

"Then shall we wait a minute till the noise stops?" she suggested.

Hill paused, though not very willingly. "There is nothing to be nervous about," he said.

She glanced at the cavernous opening with a little shudder. "I think it is a dreadful place," she said.

She saw him faintly smile. "I thought it didn't appeal much to you," he said.

She shivered. "Do you like it? But of course you do. You are interested in it. Isn't that grinding noise terrible? It makes me want to run away and hide."

Hill drew her to a large flat rock on the edge of the path. "Sit down," he said.

She did so, and he took up his stand beside her, one foot lodged upon the stone. In the silence that followed she was aware of his eyes upon her, intently watching her face. She gripped her hands hard around her knees, enduring his scrutiny with a fast-throbbing heart. She expected some curt,

"Hill stayed her with a gesture. She saw something gleam in his hand as he did so, and realized that he was not defenceless."

soul-searching question at the end of it. But none came. Instead, the noise that reverberated through the valley suddenly ceased, and there fell an intense stillness.

That racked her beyond bearing. She looked up at him at last with a desperate courage and met his eyes. "What is it?" she questioned. "Why do you—why do you look at me—like that?"

He made a brief gesture, as if refusing a challenge, and stood up. "Shall we go?" he said.

She got up also, but her knees were trembling, and in a moment his hand came out and closed with that official grip upon her elbow. He led her to the mine entrance, guiding her over the rough ground in utter silence.

They left the daylight behind them, passing almost immediately into semi-darkness. Some rough steps hewn in the rock led down into a black void before them.

"Are there no lights anywhere?" said Dot.

"Yes. There'll be a lamp round the corner. Straight on down!" said Fletcher.

But for his presence she would hardly have dared it, so great was the horror that this place had inspired within her. But to wait alone with him in that terrible empty valley was even less endurable. She went down the long, steep stair without further protest.

They reached the foot at length, and a dim light shone ahead of them. The atmosphere was vault-like and penetratingly damp. The passage divided almost immediately, and a narrow track led off between black walls of stone to the right, where in the distance another lamp shone.

Fletcher turned towards this, but very suddenly Dot clasped his arm. "Oh, don't let us go that way!" she begged. "Please don't let us go that way!"

Hill paused in response to her urgent insistence. "What's the matter with you, Dot?" he said.

She clung to him desperately, still holding him back. "I don't know—I don't know! But don't go that way! I have a horrible feeling—— Ah!"

The deafening report of a revolver-shot rang out suddenly close to them.

Hill turned with a sound in his throat like the growl of an angry animal, and in a moment he had thrust Dot back against the protecting corner of the wall.

"You are not hurt?" she gasped.

"No; I am not." His words fell clipped and stern, though spoken scarcely above a

whisper. "Don't speak! Get back up the steps—as quickly as you can!"

The command was so definite, so peremptory, that she had no thought of disobeying. But as she moved there came to her the sound of running feet. Hill stayed her with a gesture. She saw something gleam in his hand as he did so, and realized that he was not defenceless.

Her heart seemed to spring into her throat. She stood tense.

Nearer came the feet and nearer. The suspense of waiting was torture. She thought it would never end. Then suddenly, just as she looked to see a man spring from the opening of that narrow passage, they stopped.

A voice spoke. "All right! Don't shoot!" it said, and a great throb of amazement went through her. That voice—careless, debonair, half-laughing—awoke deep echoes in her heart.

A moment later Warden came calmly round the corner, his great figure looming gigantic in that confined space.

He held out his hand. "I'm sorry you've had a fright. I fired that shot. It was a signal to the men to line up for inspection."

He spoke with the utmost frankness, yet it came to Dot with an intuition she could not doubt that Hill did not believe him. He returned the revolver to his pocket, but he kept a hold upon it, and he made no movement to take the hand Warden offered.

"We came to inspect the mine, not the men," he said, shortly. "Go back and tell them to clear out!"

Dot, mutely watching, saw Warden's brows go up. He had barely glanced at her. "Oh, all right, sir," he said, easily. "They've hardly left off work yet. I'll let 'em know in good time. But first I've got something to show you. Come this way!"

He turned towards the main passage, but in a second, sharp and short, Fletcher's voice arrested him.

"Warden!"

He swung on his heel. "Well, sir?"

"You will do as I said—immediately!" The words might have been uttered by a machine, so precise, so cold, so metallic were they.

Warden stood quite motionless, facing him, and it seemed to Dot that his eyes had become two blue flames, giving out light. The pause that followed was so instinct with conflict that she thought it must end in some terrible outburst of violence.

Then, to her amazement, Warden smiled—his candid, pleasant smile. "Certainly, if you make a point of it," he said. "Perhaps you will walk up with me. The strong-room is on our way, and while you are looking at the latest specimens I will carry out your orders."

HE turned back with the words, and led the way towards the distant lamp that glimmered in the wall.

Stiffly Hill turned to the girl beside him. "Would you rather go back and wait for me?" he said.

"Oh, no!" she said, instantly. "No; I am coming too."

He said no more, but grimly stalked in the wake of Warden.

The latter moved quickly till he reached the place where the lamp was lodged in a niche in the wall. Here he stopped, stooped, and fitted a key into a narrow door that had been let into the stone. It opened outwards, and he drew aside, waiting for Hill.

"I will go and dismiss the men," he said. "May I leave you in charge till I come back? They will not come this way."

Hill paused on the threshold. The lamp cast a dim light into the place, which was close and gloomy as a prison.

"There are two steps down," said Warden. "One of them is badly broken, but it's worth your while to go in and have a look at our latest finds. You had better go first, sir. Be careful!"

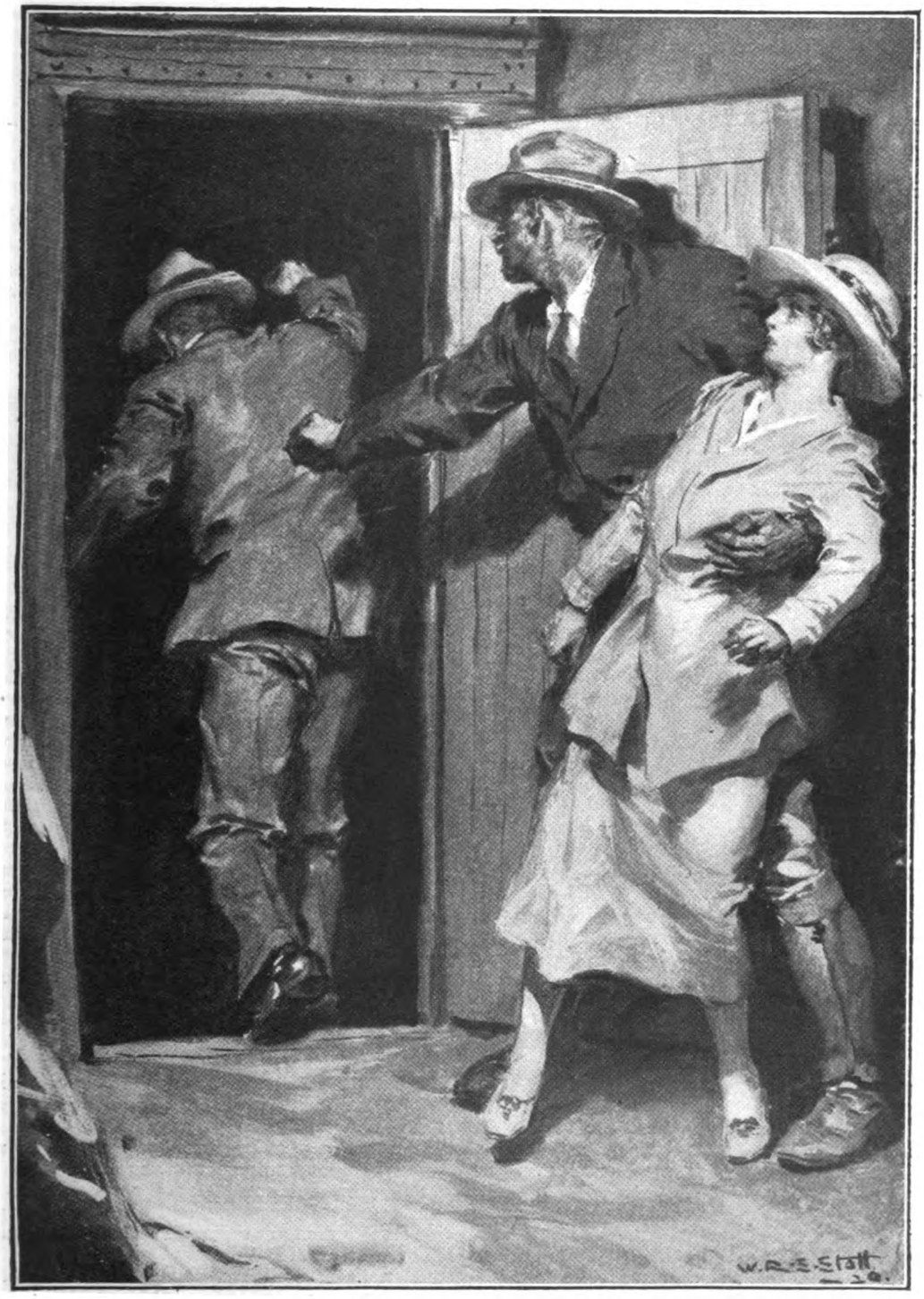
He turned to depart with the words, still ignoring Dot. She was close to Hill, and something impelled her to lay a restraining hand on his shoulder as he took the first step down.

What followed happened with such stunning swiftness that her memory of it ever afterwards was a confused jumble of impressions, like the wild course of a nightmare.

She heard Warden swing round again in his tracks, but before she could turn he had caught her and flung her backwards over his arm. With his other hand simultaneously he dealt Hill a blow in the back that sent him blundering down into the darkness, and then, with lightning rapidity, he banged the door upon his captive. The lock sprang with the impact, but he was not content with this. Still holding her, he dragged at a rough handle above his head and by main strength forced down an iron shutter over the locked door.

Then, breathing hard and speaking no word, he lifted her till she hung across his shoulder, and started to run. She had not uttered a sound, so stunned with amazement was she, so bereft of even the power to think. Her position was one of utter helplessness. He held her with one arm as easily as if she had been a baby. And she knew that in his free hand he carried his revolver.

In her bewilderment she had not the faintest idea as to the direction he took. She only knew that he ran like a hunted rat down many passages, turning now this way, now that, till at last he plunged down an unseen stairway and the sound of gurgling water reached her ears.



"He dealt Hill a blow in the back that sent him blundering down into the darkness."

He slackened his pace then, and at last stood still. He did not alter his hold upon her, however, but stood listening intently for many seconds. She hung impotent across his shoulder, feeling still too paralysed to move.

He turned his head at last and spoke to her. "Have I terrified the senses out of you, little new chum?" he whispered, softly.

That awoke her from her passivity. She made her first effort for freedom.

He drew her down into his arms and held her close.

"Right down," she said, insistently.

But he held her still. "If I let you go, you'll wander maybe, and get lost," he said.

His action surprised her, but yet that instinctive trust with which he had inspired her long ago remained, refusing to be shaken.

"Put me right down!" she said again. "And tell me why you did it!"

He set her on her feet, but he still held her. "Can't you guess?" he said.

"No!" she said. "No!"

She spoke a little wildly. Was it the first doubt that ran shadow-like across her brain, leaving her so strangely cold? She wished it had not been so dark, that she might see his face. "Tell me!" she said again.

But he did not tell her. "Don't be afraid!" was all he said in answer. "You are—safe enough."

"But—but—Fletcher?" she questioned, desperately. "What of him?"

"He's safe too—for the present." There was something of grimness in his reply. "He doesn't matter so much. He's been asking for trouble all along—but he had no right—no right whatever—to bring you into it. It's you that matters."

A curious, vibrant quality had crept into his voice, and an answering tremor went through her; but she controlled it swiftly.

"And Adela," she said. "She was with Mr. Harley. What has become of her?"

"He will take care of her for his own sake. Leave her to him!" Warden spoke with a hint of disdain. "She'll get nothing worse than a fright," he said, "possibly not even that—if he gets her to the manager's house in time."

"In time!" she echoed. "In time for what? What is going to happen? What do you mean?"

His hold tightened upon her. "Well," he said, "there's going to be a row. But I'm boss of this show, and I reckon I can deal with it. Only—I'll have you safe first, little new chum. I'm not taking any chances where you are concerned."

She gasped a little. The steady assurance of his voice stirred her strangely.

She tried to release herself from his hold. "I don't like this place," she said. "Let me go back to Mr. Hill!"

"That's just what I can't do." He bent suddenly down to her. "Won't you trust me?" he said. "I didn't fail you last time, did I?"

She thrilled in answer to those words. It was as if thereby he had flung down all barriers between them. She stood for a moment in indecision, then impulsively she turned and grasped his arms.

"I trust you—absolutely," she told him, tremulously. "But—but—though I know you don't like him—promise me—you won't let—Fletcher—be hurt!"

He, too, was silent for a moment before responding. She fancied that he flinched a little at her words. Then: "All right, I promise," he said.

"Then I will go—wherever you like," she said, bravely, and put her hand into his.

He took it into a strong grasp. "That's like you," he said, with simplicity.

CHAPTER X.

THE GREATER LOVE.

THROUGH a labyrinth of many passages he led her, over ground that was often rough and slimy, with that sound of running water in their ears, sometimes near, sometimes distant, but never wholly absent. Now and then a gleam of light would come from some distant crevice, and Dot would catch a glimpse of the rocky corridor through which they moved—catch a glimpse also of her companion walking with his free stride beside her, though occasionally he had to stoop when the roof was low. He did not look at her, seldom spoke to her, but the grasp of his hand held her up and kept all fear at bay. Somehow fear in this man's presence seemed impossible.

A long time passed, and she was sure that they had traversed a considerable distance before, very far ahead of them at the end of a steep upward slope, she discerned a patch of sky.

"Is that where we are going?" she asked.

"Yes," he said.

She gazed before her, puzzled. "But where are we? Are we still in the mine?"

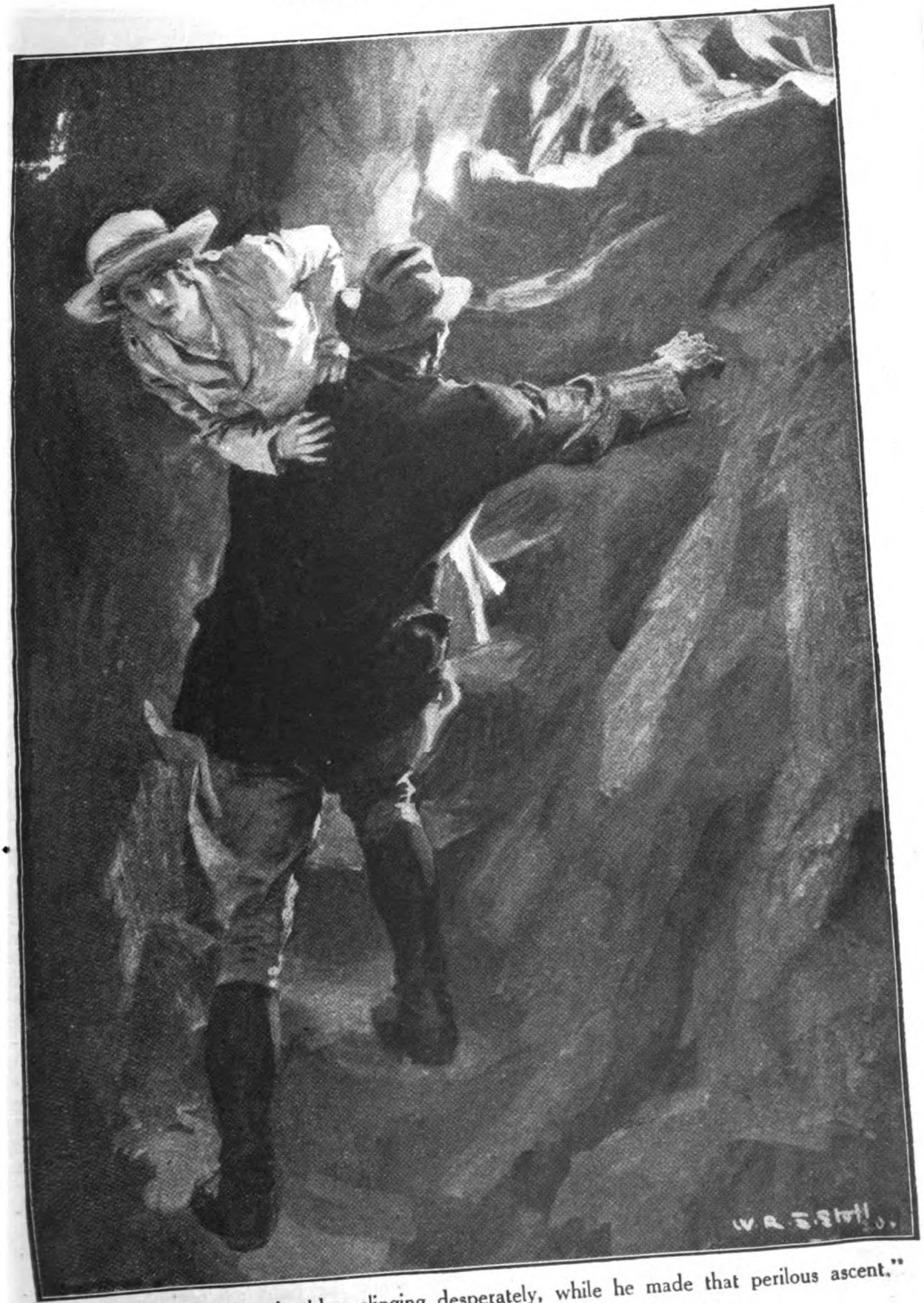
"No. This is the smugglers' warren." She caught a hint of humour in his voice. "The stream flows underground all through here—and very useful we have found it."

She gave a great start at his words. "You—you are not a smuggler!" she said.

He drew her on. "I am a good many things," he said, easily, "and the king of this rat-run amongst them. There's no one knows it as well as I do."

Her heart sank. "You said—you said yesterday—you had lived straight!" she said, in a low voice.

"Did I? But what does it matter to you



"She hung upon his shoulder, clinging desperately, while he made that perilous ascent."

how I live ? " With a touch of recklessness he put the question. " If Fletcher Hill managed to put the official seal on me, what would it matter to you—now ? "

There was almost a note of anger in his voice, yet his hand still held hers in the same close, reassuring grasp. She could not be afraid.

" It would matter," she said at last.

" I wonder why ? " said Bill Warden.

" Because—we are friends," she said.

He made a sharp sound as of dissent, but he did not openly contradict her. They were nearing the opening, and the ground was rough and broken. She stumbled once or twice, and each time he held her up. Finally they came to a flight of steps that were little more than notches cut steeply in the rock.

" I shall have to carry you here," he said.

Dot looked upwards with sharp dismay. The rocky wall rose twenty feet above her, the rough-hewn steps slanting along its face. For the first time her heart misgave her.

" What a dreadful place ! " she said.

" It's the only way out," said Warden, " unless we tramp underground nearly halfway to Wallacetown."

" Can't we go back ? " she said, nervously.

" What ! Afraid ? " He gave her hand a sudden squeeze.

She looked at him and caught the blue fire of his eyes as he bent towards her. Something moved her, she knew not what. She surrendered herself to him without a word.

Once more she hung upon his shoulder, clinging desperately, while he made that perilous ascent. He went up with amazing agility, as if he were entirely unencumbered. She felt the strength of his great frame beneath her, and marvelled. Again the magnetic force of the man possessed her, stilling all fear. She shut her eyes dizzily, but she was not afraid.

When she looked up again they were in the open. He had set her on her feet, and she stood on the rugged side of a mountain where no vestige of a path or any habitation showed in any direction. For the first time he had relinquished all hold upon her, and stood apart, almost as if he would turn and leave her.

THE brief twilight was upon them. It was as if dark wings were folding them round. A small chill wind was wandering to and fro. She shivered involuntarily. It sounded like the whispering of an evil spirit. The fear she had kept at bay for so long laid clammy hands upon her.

Instinctively she turned to the man for protection. " How shall we get away ? " she said.

He moved sharply, so sharply that for a single moment she thought that something had angered him. And then—all in one single blinding instant—she realized that which no words could utter. For he caught her swiftly to him, lifting her off her feet, and very suddenly he covered her face and neck and throat with hot, devouring kisses—kisses that electrified her—kisses that seemed to scorch and blister—yet to fill her with a pulsing rapture that was almost too great to endure.

She tried to hide her face from him, but she could not ; to protest, but his lips stopped the words upon her own. She was powerless—and very deep down within her there leaped a wild thing that rejoiced—that exulted—in her powerlessness.

The fierce storm spent itself. There came a pause during which she lay palpitating against his breast while his cheek pressed hers in a stillness that was in a fashion more compelling than even those burning kisses had been.

He spoke to her at last, and his voice was deep and tender, throbbing with that which was beyond utterance.

" You love me, little new chum," he said.

There was no question in his words. She quivered, and made no answer. That headlong outburst of passion had overwhelmed her utterly. She was as drift upon the tide.

He drew a great heaving breath, and clasped her closer. His words fell hot upon her face. " You are mine ! Why shouldn't I keep you ? Fate has given you to me. I'd be a fool to let you go again."

But something—some inner impulse that had been stunned to impotence by his violence—stirred within her at his words and awoke. Yet it was scarcely of her own volition that she answered him. " I am—not—yours."

Very faintly the words came from her trembling lips, but the utterance of them gave her new strength. She moved at last in his hold. She turned her face away from him.

" What do you mean ? " He spoke in a fierce whisper, but—she felt it instinctively—there was less of assurance in his hold. It was that that added to her strength, but she offered no active resistance, realizing wherein lay his weakness—and her own.

" I mean," she said, and though it still trembled beyond her control, her voice gathered confidence with the words, " that by taking me—by keeping me—you are taking—keeping—what is not your own."

" Love gives me the right," he asserted, swiftly—" your love—and mine."

But the clearer vision had come to her. She shook her head against his shoulder. " No—no ! That is wrong. That is not—the greater love."

"What do you mean by—the greater love?" He was holding her still closely, but no longer with that fierce possession.

She answered him with a steadiness that surprised herself: "I mean the only love that is worth having—the love that lasts."

He caught up the words passionately. "And hasn't my love lasted? Have I ever thought of any other woman since the day I met you? Haven't I been fighting against odds ever since to be able to come to you an honest man—and worthy of your love?"

"Oh, I know—I know!" she said, and there was a sound of heartbreak in her voice. "But—the odds have been too heavy. I thought you had forgotten—long ago."

"Forgotten!" he said.

"Yes." With a sob she answered him. "Men do forget—nearly all of them. Fletcher Hill didn't. He kept on waiting, and—and—they said it wasn't fair—to spoil a man's life for a dream—that could never come true. So—I gave in at last. I am—promised to him."

"Against your will?" His arms tightened upon her again. "Tell me, little new chum! Was it against your will?"

"No! Oh, no!" She whispered the words through tears. "I gave in—willingly. I thought it was better than—an empty life."

"Ah!" The word fell like a groan. "And that's what you're going to condemn me to, is it?"

She turned in his arms, summoning her strength. "We've got to play the game," she said. "I've got to keep my word—whatever it costs. And you—you are going to keep yours."

"My word?" he questioned, swiftly.

"Yes." She lifted her head. "If—if you really care about being honest—if your love is worth—anything at all—that is the only way. You promised—you promised—to save him."

"Save him for you?" he said.

"Yes—save him for me." She did not know how she uttered the words, but somehow they were spoken.

They went into a silence that wrung her soul, and it cost her every atom of her strength not to recall them.

Bill Warden stood quite motionless for many pulsing seconds, then—very, very slowly—at length his hold began to slacken.

In the end he set her on her feet—and she was free. "All right, little new chum!" he said, and she heard a new note in his voice—a note that waked in her a wild impulse to spring back into his arms and cling to him—and cling to him. "I'll do it—for you—if it kills me—just to show you—little girl—just to show you—what my love for you is really worth."

He stood a moment, facing her; then his hands clenched and he turned away.

"Let's go down the hill!" he said. "I'll see you in safety first."

(To be concluded.)

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 91.

(The Third of the Series.)

A SONNET ACROSTIC.

A PRIEST and bishop, martyrs, consecrate
The festival that lovers celebrate.

1. "The idle" poets "of an empty day"
2. Sing of a shaft propelled from Cupid's bow,
3. To set on fire, and kindle to a glow,
4. An ice-cold maid, new-pent in cloister grey;
5. The hooded robe, her virginal array,
6. Hideth her face, that fain she would not show
7. Hot with the flame a vestal should not know—
8. Its surging flushes melting depths betray!
9. 'Tis human thus to wander from the way:
10. What can avail when fire encounters snow?
11. Forgive her this, who for forgiveness pray!
12. Shut off, immured, unmated, even so—
13. Spirit earth-born, that scents afar the spring,
14. Reveals the Power that works in everything.

EDI.

ANSWER TO No. 90.

1.	B	rodrib	B
2.	A	chil	L
3.	T	un	E
4.	T	axatio	N
5.	L	amlas	H
6.	E	ssenc	E
7.	O	rsin	I
8.	F	u	M

NOTES.—Light 1. Sir Henry Irving. 2. Achilles. 7. Against Napoleon III. 8. Fee-fi-fo-fum; any fitting part of the word.

ACROSTIC No. 88.—For the first light the published answer, "Bushel," provides an unimpeachable solution; but it appears that it is far from exclusive, and a number of other words fulfil the required conditions. The Acrostic Editor has decided that all solvers who sent answers to the acrostic must be credited with this light. For the third light "Grassmarket" furnishes a satisfactory answer, and for the sixth light "Boy-blue."

Answers to Acrostic No. 91 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on February 9th.

Solutions should be signed at the foot with the sender's pseudonym.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

FIFTEENTH SERIES: RESULT.

All the acrostics of the series were answered correctly by Beggar, Cam, Forest, Junius, Mersey, Vinjo, Wals, Wynell, and Zyme; next to them come sixteen solvers who missed only one light. Of the nine leaders, Beggar is ineligible for a prize this time: the other eight will each receive a cheque for a guinea and a half, and will be disqualified from success in the sixteenth series, now running.

The successful solvers are: Cam, Dr. G. Roper, 5, Regent Street, Cambridge; Forest, Mr. P. E. Herrick, 49A, Tremaine Road, Anerley, S.E.20; Junius, Mr. F. C. W. Grigson, Amesbury, Hindhead, Surrey; Mersey, Mrs. J. H. Heeley, Elm Lodge, Formby, Liverpool; Vinjo, Mrs. C. B. Keston, Holme Lea, Ilkley, Yorks; Wals, Mr. W. Stradling, 12, Bardswell Road, Oxford; Wynell, Mr. E. W. M. Lloyd, Hartford House, Hartley Wintney, Hants; Zyme, Mr. J. W. Pulsford, 57, Deauville Road, Clapham, S.W.4.

The Wigmore Venus

by P. G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrated by A. Wallis Mills.

THE summer morning was so brilliantly fine, the populace popped to and fro in so active and cheery a manner, and everybody appeared to be so absolutely in the pink, that a casual observer of the city of New York would have said that it was one of those happy days. Yet Archie Moffam, as he turned out of the sun-bathed street into the ramshackle building on the third floor of which was the studio belonging to his artist friend, James B. Wheeler, was faintly oppressed with a sort of a kind of feeling that something was wrong. He would not have gone so far as to say that he had the pip; it was more a vague sense of discomfort. And, searching for first causes as he made his way upstairs, he came to the conclusion that the person responsible for this nebulous depression was his wife, Lucille. It seemed to Archie that at breakfast that morning Lucille's manner had been subtly rummy. Nothing you could put your finger on, still—rummy.

Musing thus, he reached the studio, and found the door open and the room empty. It had the air of a room whose owner has dashed in to fetch his golf-clubs and biffed off, after the casual fashion of the artist temperament, without bothering to close up behind him. And such, indeed, was the case. The studio had seen the last of J. B. Wheeler for that day; but Archie, not realizing this and feeling that a chat with Mr. Wheeler, who was a light-hearted bird, was what he needed this morning, sat down to wait. After a few moments his gaze, straying over the room, encountered a handsomely-framed picture, and he went across to take a look at it.

J. B. Wheeler was an artist who made a large annual income as an illustrator for the magazines, and it was a surprise to Archie to find that he also went in for this kind of thing. For the picture, dashingly painted in oils, represented a comfortably plump young woman, who, from her rather weak-minded simper and the fact that she wore absolutely nothing except a dove on the left shoulder, was plainly intended to be the goddess Venus.

He inspected this picture for awhile, then, returning to his seat, lit a cigarette, and began to meditate on Lucille once more. Yes, the dear girl had been rummy at breakfast. She had not exactly said anything or done anything out of the ordinary; but—well, you know how it is. We husbands, we lads of the for-better-or-for-worse brigade, we learn to pierce the mask. There had been in Lucille's manner that curious, strained sweetness which comes to women whose husbands have failed to match the piece of silk or forgotten to post an important letter. If his conscience had not been as clear as crystal, Archie would have said that that was what must have been the matter. But when Lucille wrote letters, she just stepped

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out of the suite and dropped them in the post-box attached to the lift. It couldn't be that. And he couldn't have forgotten anything else, because——

"Oh, my sainted aunt!"

Archie's cigarette smouldered, neglected, between his fingers. His jaw had fallen and his eyes were staring glassily before him. He was appalled. His memory was weak, he knew; but never before had it let him down so scurvily as this. This was a record. It stood in a class by itself, printed in red ink and marked with a star, as the bloomer of a lifetime. For a man may forget many things: he may forget his name, his umbrella, his nationality, his spats, and the friends of his youth; but there is one thing which your married man, your in-sickness-and-in-health lizard, must not forget: and that is the anniversary of his wedding-day.

Remorse swept over Archie like a wave. His heart bled for Lucille. No wonder the poor girl had been rummy at breakfast! What girl wouldn't be rummy at breakfast, tied for life to a ghastly outsider like himself? He groaned hollowly, and sagged forlornly in his chair; and, as he did so, the Venus caught his eye. For it was an eye-catching picture. You might like it or dislike it, but you could not ignore it.

As a strong swimmer shoots to the surface after a high dive, Archie's soul rose suddenly from the depths to which it had descended. He did not often get inspirations, but he got one now. Hope dawned with a jerk. The one way out had presented itself to him. A rich present! That was the wheeze. If he returned to her bearing a rich present he might, with the help of Heaven and a face of brass, succeed in making her believe that he had merely pretended to forget the vital date in order to enhance the surprise.

It was a scheme. It was more, it was an egg. Like some great general forming his plan of campaign on the eve of battle, Archie had the whole binge neatly worked out inside a minute. He scribbled a note to Mr. Wheeler, explaining the situation and promising reasonable payment on the instalment system; then, placing the note in a conspicuous position on the easel, he leaped to the telephone, and presently found himself connected with Lucille's room at the Cosmopolis.

"Hallo, darling!" he cooed.

There was a slight pause at the other end of the wire.

"Oh, hallo, Archie!"

Lucille's voice was dull and listless, and Archie's experienced ear could detect that she had been crying. He raised his right foot and kicked himself indignantly on the left ankle.

"Many happy returns of the day, old thing!"

A muffled sob floated over the wire.

"There was a little unpleasantness with the cabman before starting."

" Have you only just remembered ? " said Lucille, in a small voice.

Archie, bracing himself up, cackled gleefully into the receiver.

" Did I take you in, light of my home ? Do you mean to say you really thought I had forgotten ? For Heaven's sake ! "

" You didn't say a word at breakfast."

" Ah, but that was all part of the devilish cunning. I hadn't got a present for you then. At least, I didn't know whether it was ready."

" Oh, Archie, you darling ! " Lucille's voice had lost its crushed melancholy. She trilled like a thrush or a linnet, or any bird that goes in largely for trilling. " Have you really got me a present ? "

" It's here now. The dickens of a fruity picture. One of J. B. Wheeler's things. You'll like it."

" Oh, I know I shall ! I love his work. You are an angel ! We'll hang it over the piano."

" I'll be round with it in something under three ticks, star of my soul. I'll take a taxi."

" Yes, do hurry ! I want to hug you ! "

" Right-o ! " said Archie. " I'll take two taxis."

IT is not far from Washington Square to the Hotel Cosmopolis, and Archie made the journey without mishap. There was a little unpleasantness with the cabman before starting—he, on the prudish plea that he was a married man with a local reputation to keep up, declining at first to be seen in company with the masterpiece. But on Archie giving a promise to keep the front of the picture away from the public gaze, he consented to take the job on ; and, some ten minutes later, having made his way blushfully through the hotel lobby and endured the frank curiosity of the boy who worked the lift, Archie entered his suite, the picture in his arms.

He placed it carefully against the wall in order to leave himself more scope for embracing Lucille ; and when the joyful reunion—or the sacred scene, if you prefer so to call it—was concluded, he stepped forward to turn it round and exhibit it.

" Why, it's enormous ! " said Lucille. " I didn't know Mr. Wheeler ever painted pictures that size. When you said it was one of his, I thought it must be the original of a magazine drawing, or something like—— Oh ! "

Archie had moved back and given her an uninterrupted view of the work of art, and she had started as if some unkindly-disposed person had driven a bradawl into her.

" Pretty ripe, what ? " said Archie, enthusiastically.

Lucille did not speak for a moment. It may have been sudden joy that kept her silent. Or, on the other hand, it may not. She stood looking at the picture with wide eyes and parted lips.

" A bird, eh ? " said Archie.

" Y-yes," said Lucille.

" I knew you'd like it," proceeded Archie, with animation. " You see, you're by way of being a picture-hound—know all about the things and what not—inherit it from the dear old dad, I shouldn't wonder. Personally, I can't tell one picture from another as a rule, but I'm bound to say, the moment I set eyes on this, I said to myself, ' What ho ! ' or words to that effect. I rather think this will add a touch of distinction to the home, yes—no ? I'll hang it up, shall I ? 'Phone down to the office, light of my soul, and tell them to send up a nail, a bit of string, and the hotel hammer."

" One moment, darling. I'm not quite sure——"

" Eh ? "

"——where it ought to hang, I mean. You see——"

" Over the piano, you said. The jolly old piano."

" Yes, but I hadn't seen it then."

A monstrous suspicion flitted for an instant into Archie's mind.

" I say, you *do* like it, don't you ? " he said, anxiously.

" Oh, Archie, darling ! Of *course* I do ! And it was so sweet of you to give it to me ! But what I was trying to say was that this picture is so—so striking that I feel that we ought to wait a little while and decide where it would have the best effect. The light over the piano is rather strong."

" You think it ought to hang in a dimmish light, what ? "

" Yes, yes. The dimmer the—I mean, yes, in a dim light. Suppose we leave it in the corner for the moment—over there—behind the sofa, and—I'll think it over. It wants a lot of thought, you know."

" Right-o ! Here ? "

" Yes, that will do splendidly. Oh, and, Archie ! "

" Hallo ? "

" I think, perhaps—— Just turn its face to the wall, will you ? " Lucille gave a little gulp. " It will prevent it getting dusty."

It perplexed Archie a little during the next few days to notice in Lucille, whom he had always looked on as pre-eminently a girl who knew her own mind, a curious streak of vacillation. Quite half-a-dozen times he suggested various spots on the wall as suitable for the Venus, but Lucille seemed unable to decide. Archie wished that she would settle on something definite, for he wanted to invite J. B. Wheeler to the suite to see the thing. He had heard nothing from the artist since the day he had removed the

picture ; and one morning, encountering him on Broadway, he expressed his appreciation of the very decent manner in which the other had taken the whole affair.

" Oh, that ! " said J. B. Wheeler. " My dear fellow, you're welcome." He paused for a moment. " More than welcome," he added. " You aren't much of an expert on pictures, are you ? "

" Well," said Archie, " I don't know that you'd call me an absolute nib, don't you know, but of course I know enough to see that this particular exhibit is not a little fruity. Absolutely one of the best things you've ever done, laddie."

A slight purple tinge manifested itself in Mr. Wheeler's round and rosy face. His eyes bulged.

" What are you talking about, you Tish-bite ? You misguided son of Belial, are you under the impression that *I* painted that thing ? "

" Didn't you ? "

Mr. Wheeler swallowed a little convulsively.

" My *fiancée* painted it," he said, shortly.

" Your *fiancée ?* My dear old lad, I didn't know you were engaged. Who is she ? Do I know her ? "

" Her name is Alice Wigmore. You don't know her."

" And she painted that picture ? " Archie was perturbed. " But, I say ! Won't she be apt to wonder where the thing has got to ? "

" I told her it had been stolen. She thought it a great compliment, and was tickled to death. So that's all right."

" And, of course, she'll paint you another."

" Not while I have my strength she won't," said J. B. Wheeler, firmly. " She's given up painting since I taught her golf, thank goodness ! and my best efforts shall be employed in seeing that she doesn't have a relapse."

" But, laddie," said Archie, puzzled, " you talk as though there were something wrong with the picture. I thought it dashed fine stuff."

" God bless you ! " said J. B. Wheeler.

Archie proceeded on his way, still mystified.

AT breakfast next morning Archie once more brought up the question of the hanging of the picture.

" Touching the jolly old masterpiece," he said. " How about it ? I think it's time we hoisted it up somewhere."

" Archie, dear," said Lucille, " I've been thinking."

" And a very good thing to do," said Archie. " I've often meant to do it myself when I got a bit of time."

" About that picture, I mean. Did you know it was father's birthday to-morrow ? "

" Why, no, old thing, I didn't, to be absolutely honest. Your revered parent doesn't confide in me much these days, as a matter of fact."

" Well, it is. And I think we ought to give him a present."

" Absolutely. But how ? I'm all for spreading sweetness and light and cheering up the jolly old pater's sorrowful existence, but I haven't a bean. And, what is more, things have come to such a pass that I scan the horizon without seeing a single soul I can touch. I suppose I could get into Reggie van Tuyl's ribs for a bit, but—I don't know—touching poor old Reggie always seems to me rather like potting a sitting bird."

" Of course I don't want you to do anything like that. I was thinking—— Archie, darling, would you be very hurt if I gave father the picture ? "

" Oh, I say ! "

" Well, I can't think of anything else."

" But wouldn't you miss it most frightfully ? "

" Oh, of course I should ! But, you see—father's birthday——"

Archie had always thought Lucille the dearest and most unselfish angel in the world, but never had the fact come home to him so forcibly as now. He kissed her fondly.

" By Jove ! " he exclaimed. " You really are, you know ! This is the biggest thing since jolly old Sir Philip What's-his-name gave the drink of water to the poor blighter whose need was greater than his, if you recall the incident. I had to sweat it up at school, I remember. Sir Philip, poor old bean, had a most ghastly thirst on, and he was just going to have one on the house, so to speak, when—but it's all in the history books. This is the sort of thing Boy Scouts do ! Well, of course, it's up to you, queen of my soul. If you feel like making the sacrifice, right-o ! Shall I bring the pater up here and show him the picture ? "

" No, I shouldn't do that. Do you think you could get into his suite to-morrow morning and hang it up somewhere ? You see, if he had the chance of—what I mean is, if—yes, I think it would be best to hang it up, and let him discover it there."

" It would give him a surprise, you mean, what ? "

" Yes."

Lucille sighed inaudibly. She was a girl with a conscience, and that conscience was troubling her a little. She agreed with Archie that the discovery of the Wigmore Venus in his artistically-furnished suite would give Mr. Brewster a surprise. Surprise, indeed, was perhaps an inadequate word. She was sorry for her father, but the instinct

of self-preservation is stronger than any other emotion.

ARCHIE whistled merrily on the following morning as, having driven a nail into his father-in-law's wall-paper, he adjusted the cord from which the Wigmore Venus was suspended. He had just completed his work and was stepping cautiously down, when a voice behind him nearly caused him to overbalance.

"What the devil?"

Archie turned beamingly.

"Hallo, old thing! Many happy returns of the day!"

Mr. Brewster was standing in a frozen attitude. His strong face was slightly flushed.

"What—what——?" he gurgled.

Mr. Brewster was not in one of his sunniest moods that morning. The proprietor of a large hotel has many things to disturb him, and to-day things had been going wrong. He had come up to his suite with the idea of restoring his shaken nerve-system with a quiet cigar, and the sight of his son-in-law had, as so frequently happened, made him feel worse than ever.

He stared at the Venus dumbly. Unlike most hotel proprietors, Daniel Brewster was a connoisseur of art. Connoisseuring was, in fact, his hobby. Even the public rooms of the Cosmopolis were decorated with taste, and his own private suite was a shrine of all that was best and most artistic. His tastes were quiet and restrained, and it is not too much to say that the Wigmore Venus hit him behind the ear like a stuffed eel-skin.

So great was the shock that for some moments it kept him silent, and before he could recover speech Archie had explained.

"It's a birthday present from Lucille, don't you know."

Mr. Brewster crushed down the breezy speech he had intended to utter.

"Lucille gave me—that?" he muttered.

He swallowed pathetically. He was suffering, but the iron courage of the Brewsters stood him in good stead. This man was no weakling. Presently the rigidity of his face relaxed. He was himself again. Of all things in the world he loved his daughter most, and if, in whatever mood of temporary insanity, she had brought herself to suppose that this beastly daub was the sort of thing he would like for a birthday present, he must accept the situation like a man. He would on the whole have preferred death to a life lived in the society of the Wigmore Venus, but even that torment must be endured if the alternative was the hurting of Lucille's feelings.

"I think I've chosen a pretty likely spot to hang the thing, what?" said Archie, cheerfully. "It looks well alongside those Japanese prints, don't you think? Sort of stands out."

Mr. Brewster licked his dry lips and grinned a ghastly grin.

"It does stand out!" he agreed.

ARCHIE was not a man who readily allowed himself to become worried, especially about people who were not in his own immediate circle of friends; but in the course of the next week he was bound to admit that he was not altogether easy in his mind about his father-in-law's mental condition. Undeniably he was behaving in an odd manner, and Archie, though no physician, was aware that, when the American business-man, that restless, ever-active human machine, starts behaving in an odd manner, the next thing you know is that two strong men, one attached to each arm, are hurrying him into the cab bound for the asylum.

He did not confide his misgivings to Lucille, not wishing to cause her anxiety. He hunted up Reggie van Tuyl at the club, and sought advice from him.

"I say, Reggie, old thing—present company excepted—have there been any loonies in your family?"

Reggie stirred in the slumber which always gripped him in the early afternoon.

"Loonies?" he mumbled, sleepily. "Rather! My uncle Edgar thought he was twins."

"Twins, eh?"

"Yes. Silly idea! I mean, you'd have thought one of my uncle Edgar would have been enough for any man."

"How did the thing start?" asked Archie.

"Start? Well, the first thing we noticed was when he began wanting two of everything. Had to set two places for him at dinner, and so on. Always wanted two seats at the theatre. Ran into money, I can tell you."

"He didn't behave rummily up till then? I mean to say, wasn't sort of jumpy and all that?"

"Not that I remember. Why?"

Archie's tone became grave.

"Well, I'll tell you, old man, though I don't want it to go any farther, that I'm a bit worried about my jolly old father-in-law. I believe he's about to go in off the deep end. I think he's cracking under the strain. Dashed weird his behaviour has been the last few days."

"Such as?" murmured Mr. van Tuyl.

"Well, the other morning I happened to be in his suite—incidentally, he wouldn't go above ten dollars, and I wanted twenty-five—and he suddenly picked up a whacking big paper-weight and bunged it for all he was worth."

"At you?"

"Not at me. That was the rummy part of it. At a mosquito on the wall, he said. Well, I mean to say, do chappies bung paper-weights at mosquitoes? I mean, is it done?"

"Smash anything?"

"Curiously enough, no. But he only just missed a rather decent picture which Lucille had given him for his birthday. Another foot to the left and it would have been a goner."

"Sounds queer."

"And, talking of that picture, I looked in on him about a couple of afternoons later, and he'd taken it down from the wall and laid it on the floor, and was staring at it in a dashed marked sort of manner. That was peculiar, what?"

"On the floor?"

"On the jolly old carpet. When I came in, he was goggling at it in a sort of glassy way. Absolutely rapt, don't you know. My coming in gave him a start—seemed to rouse him from a kind of trance, you know—and he jumped like an antelope, and, if I hadn't happened to grab him, he would have trampled bang on the thing. It was deuced unpleasant, you know. His manner was rummy. He seemed to be brooding on something. What ought I to do about it, do you think? It's not my affair, of course, but it seems to me that, if he goes on like this, one of these days he'll be stabbing someone with a pickle-fork."

"He had just completed his work, when a voice behind him nearly caused him to overbalance."

To Archie's relief, his father-in-law's symptoms showed no signs of development. In fact, his manner reverted to the normal once more: and a few days later, meeting Archie in the lobby of the hotel, he seemed quite cheerful. It was not often that he wasted his time talking to his son-in-law, but on this occasion he chatted with him for several minutes about the big picture robbery which had formed the chief item of news on the front pages of the morning papers that day. It was Mr. Brewster's opinion that the outrage had been the work of a gang, and that nobody was safe.

Daniel Brewster had spoken of this matter with a strange earnestness, but his words had slipped from Archie's mind when he made his way that night to his father-in-law's suite. Archie was in an exalted mood. In the course of dinner he had had a bit of good news which was occupying his thoughts to the exclusion of all other matters. It had left him in a comfortable, if rather

dizzy, condition of benevolence to all created things.

He found the door of the Brewster suite unlocked, which at any other time would have struck him as unusual; but to-night he was in no frame of mind to notice these trivialities. He went in, and, finding the room dark and no one at home, sat down too absorbed in his thoughts to switch on the lights, and gave himself up to dreamy meditation.

THERE are certain moods in which one loses count of time, and Archie could not have said how long he had been sitting in the deep arm-chair near the window when he first became aware that he was not alone in the room. He had closed his eyes, the better to meditate, so had not seen anyone enter. Nor had he heard the door open. The first intimation he had that somebody had come in was when some hard substance knocked against some other hard object, producing a sharp sound which brought him back to earth with a jerk.

He sat up silently. The fact that the room was still in darkness made it obvious that something nefarious was afoot. Plainly there was dirty work in preparation at the cross-roads. He stared into the blackness, and as his eyes grew accustomed to it, was presently able to see an indistinct form bending over something on the floor. The sound of rather stertorous breathing came to him.

Archie had many defects which prevented him being the perfect man, but lack of courage was not one of them. He was out of his chair and sailing in the direction of the back of the intruder's neck before a wiser man would have completed his plan of campaign. The miscreant collapsed under him with a squashy sound, like the wind going out of a pair of bellows; and Archie, taking a firm seat on his spine, rubbed the other's face in the carpet and awaited the progress of events.

At the end of half a minute it became apparent that there was going to be no counter-attack. The dashing swiftness of the assault had, apparently, had the effect of depriving the marauder of his entire stock of breath. He was gurgling to himself in a pained sort of way and making no effort to rise. Archie, feeling that it would be safe to get up and switch on the light, did so; and, turning after completing the manœuvre, was greeted by the spectacle of his father-in-law, seated on the floor in a breathless and dishevelled condition, blinking at the sudden illumination. On the carpet beside Mr. Brewster lay a long knife, and beside the knife lay the handsomely-framed masterpiece of J. B. Wheeler's *fiancée*, Miss Alice Wigmore. Archie stared at this collection dumbly.

"Oh, what-ho!" he observed at length, feebly.

A distinct chill manifested itself in the region of Archie's spine. This could mean only one thing. His fears had been realized. The strain of modern life had at last proved too much for Mr. Brewster. Crushed by the thousand-and-one worries of a millionaire's existence, Daniel Brewster had gone off his onion.

Archie was nonplussed. This was his first experience of this kind of thing. What, he asked himself, was the proper procedure in a situation of this sort? He was still musing in an embarrassed and baffled way, when Mr. Brewster spoke. And there was in both the words and the method of their delivery so much of his old familiar self that Archie felt quite relieved.

"So it's you, is it, you wretched blighter?" said Mr. Brewster. He glowered at his son-in-law despondently. "I might have expected it! If I was at the North Pole, I could count on you butting in!"

"Shall I get you a drink of water?" said Archie.

"What the devil," demanded Mr. Brewster, "do you imagine I want with a drink of water?"

"Well——" Archie hesitated, delicately. "I had a sort of idea that you had been feeling the strain a bit. I mean to say, rush of modern life and all that sort of thing."

"What are you doing in my room?" said Mr. Brewster, changing the subject.

"Well, I came to tell you something, and I came in here and was waiting for you, and I saw some chappie biffing about in the dark, and I thought it was a burglar or something, after some of your things; so, thinking it over, I got the idea that it would be a fairly juicy scheme to land on him with both feet. No idea it was you, old thing! Frightfully sorry and all that. Meant well!"

Mr. Brewster sighed deeply. He was a just man, and he could not but realize that, in the circumstances, Archie had behaved not unnaturally.

"Oh, well," he said, "I might have known something would go wrong."

"Awfully sorry!"

"It can't be helped. What was it you wanted to tell me?" He eyed his son-in-law piercingly. "Not a cent over twenty dollars!" he said, coldly.

Archie hastened to dispel the pardonable error.

"Oh, it wasn't anything like that," he said. "As a matter of fact, I think it's a good egg. It has bucked me up to no inconsiderable degree. I was dining with Lucille just now, and, as we dallied with the

you would mind at some tolerably near date being a grandfather! Rotten thing to be, of course," proceeded Archie, commiseratingly, "for a chappie of your age; but there it is!"

Mr. Brewster gulped.

"Do you mean to say——"

"I mean, apt to make a fellow feel a bit of a patriarch. Snowy hair and what not. And, of course, for a chappie in the prime of life like you——"

"Do you mean to tell me—— Is this true?"

"Absolutely! Of course, speaking for myself, I'm all for it. I don't know when I've felt more bucked. I sang as I came up

"Archie switched on the light, and was greeted by the spectacle of his father-in-law seated on the floor in a breathless and dishevelled condition."

foodstuffs, she told me something which—well, I'm bound to say it made me feel considerably braced. She told me to trot along and ask if you would mind——"

"I gave Lucille a hundred dollars only last Tuesday."

Archie was pained.

"Adjust this sordid outlook, old thing," he urged. "You simply aren't anywhere near it. Right off the target, absolutely! What Lucille told me to ask you was if here—absolutely warbled in the lift. But you——"

A curious change had come over Mr. Brewster. For a moment he gazed at Archie, then, moving quickly forward, he grasped his hand in an iron grip.

"This is the best news I've ever had."

"Awfully good of you to take it like this," said Archie, cordially. "I mean, being a grandfather."

Mr. Brewster smiled. Of a man of his

appearance one could hardly say that he smiled playfully; but there was something in his expression that remotely suggested playfulness.

"My dear old bean!" he said.

Archie started.

"My dear old bean," repeated Mr. Brewster, firmly, "I'm the happiest man in America!" His eyes fell on the picture which lay on the floor. He gave a slight shudder, but recovered himself immediately. "After this," he said, "I can reconcile myself to living with that thing for the rest of my life. I feel it doesn't matter."

"I say," said Archie, "how about that? Wouldn't have brought the thing up if you hadn't introduced the topic, but, speaking as man to man, what the dickens *were* you up to when I landed on your spine just now?"

"I suppose you thought I had gone off my head?"

"Well, I'm bound to say——"

Mr. Brewster cast an unfriendly glance at the picture.

"Well, I had every excuse, after living with that infernal thing for a week."

Archie looked at him, astonished.

"I say, old thing, I don't know if I have got your meaning exactly, but you somehow give me the impression that you don't like that jolly old work of art."

"Like it!" cried Mr. Brewster. "It's nearly driven me mad. Every time it caught my eye it gave me a pain in the neck. To-night I felt as if I couldn't stand it any longer. I didn't want to hurt Lucille's feelings by telling her, so I made up my mind I would cut the darned thing out of its frame and tell her it had been stolen."

"What an extraordinary thing! Why, that's exactly what old Wheeler did."

"Who is old Wheeler?"

"Artist chappie. Pal of mine. His *fiancée* painted the thing, and, when I lifted it off him, he told her it had been stolen. *He* didn't seem frightfully keen on it, either."

"'I only hope,' he added, 'that your son will be like you!'"

"Your friend Wheeler evidently has good taste."

Archie was thinking.

"Well, all this rather gets past me," he said. "Personally, I've always admired the thing. Dashed ripe bit of work, I've always considered. Still, if you feel that way——"

"You may take it from me that I do!"

"Well, then, in that case—you know what a clumsy devil I am—you can tell Lucille it was all my fault."

The Wigmore Venus smiled up at Archie—it seemed to Archie with a pathetic, pleading smile. For a moment he was conscious of a feeling of guilt; then, closing his eyes and hardening his heart, he sprang lightly in the air and descended with both feet on the picture. There was a sound of rending canvas, and the Venus ceased to smile.

"Golly!" said Archie, regarding the wreckage remorsefully.

Mr. Brewster did not share his remorse. For the second time that night he gripped him by the hand.

"My boy!" he quavered. He stared at Archie as if he were seeing him with new eyes. "My dear boy, you were through the war, were you not?"

"Eh? Oh, yes. Right through the jolly old war!"

"What was your rank?"

"Oh, second lieutenant."

"You ought really to have been a general." Mr. Brewster clasped his hand once more in a vigorous embrace. "I only hope," he added, "that your son will be like you!"

There are certain compliments, or compliments coming from certain sources, before which modesty reels, stunned. Archie's did.

He swallowed convulsively. He had never thought to hear these words from Daniel Brewster.

"How would it be, old thing," he said, almost brokenly, "if you and I trickled down to the bar and had a little spot of sherbet?"

FIFTY YEARS OF SCENE PAINTING

MR. JOSEPH HARKER.

An Interview with MR. JOSEPH HARKER

By REGINALD POUND.

MR. JOSEPH HARKER has created some of the finest spectacular scenes of recent years—one need cite only "Kismet," "Chu Chin Chow," and more particularly, in reference to the past twelve months, "A Southern Maid"—perhaps his *chef d'œuvre*—and "The Garden of Allah," notably its middle "Garden" scene.

I therefore counted myself fortunate when Mr. Harker, who, it is interesting to note, has been appointed president of the newly-formed Guild of Scene Painters, agreed to receive me, to be interviewed for the first time on the subject of himself and his work.

His studio is one of the biggest of its kind in the country—from the outside it looks big enough to house R34 or either of her sister craft—and quite dwarfs Mr. Oscar Asche's commodious "property" store, which adjoins it. At the time of my visit Mr. Harker was, by a happy coincidence, celebrating the completion of exactly half a century of scene-painting—by working harder than ever. I found him engaged on a canvas, sixty feet by forty feet or so—"quite a small one for this studio," he remarked, when I commented wonderingly on its size—which will soon be seen and admired by Antipodean audiences.

For a few moments he continued to ply his brush; then David, the studio handyman, his garments plastered with the paint of thirty years' service, strove valiantly at a winch, at which I half expected to see a boat appear in the foreground of the blue Mediterranean seascape, so suggestive was the action; and slowly the lower portion of the great picture sank out of sight through an aperture in the floor, until the upper edge was nearly level with the eyes. A studied reference to a model stage-setting which stood on a near-by table; a daub of blue and a touch of crimson on a range of hills that marked the horizon of the scene; and Mr. Harker was free to talk.

"I suppose it is a fact," he said, when

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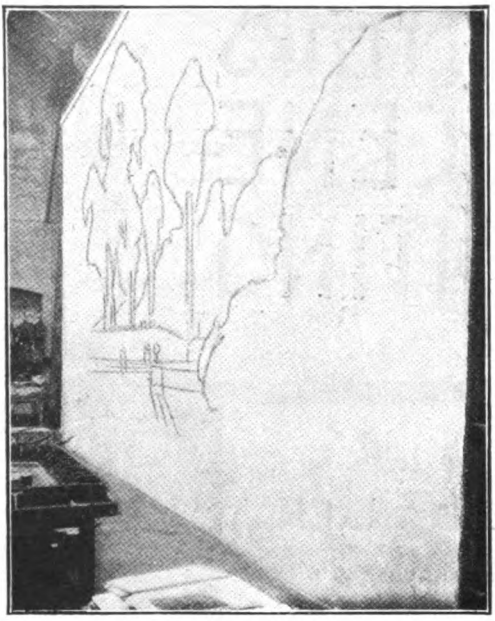
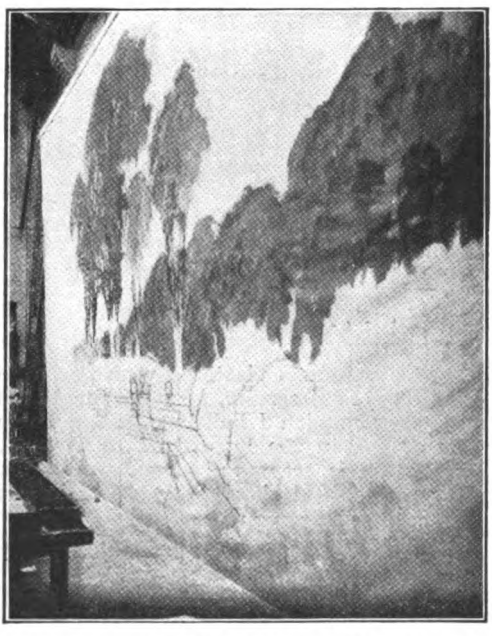
we had adjourned to a quiet corner of the painting-room, "that very few people realize the amount of labour involved in the making of a stage scene. Some seem to think that a piece of scenery is merely a thing of daubs and splashes, that the colours are just flung on with the brush, and that so long as the artist—he isn't an artist in the estimation of those who hold this view of the scene-painter's job—succeeds in transforming his canvas into a presentable likeness of, say, Piccadilly, or a dell in Arcady, nothing else matters.

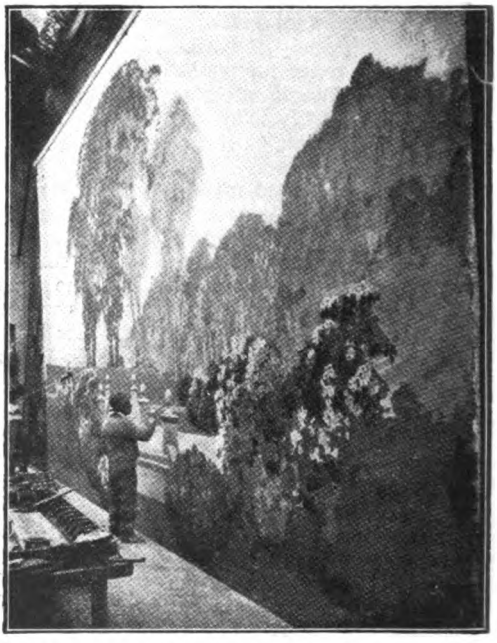
"In defence of my fellow-craftsmen I would like to say that scene-painting is a rather more complicated business than that! One of the greatest of the scenic artist's difficulties is that he is able to see and work on only a comparatively small portion of his canvas at a time, a fact which demands of him unerring judgment in visualizing the effect of his work as a whole.



"In practice every stage scene has its genesis with the producer. That is to say, when a new play is being brought out the design and style of the settings are decided by the producer, acting perhaps in conjunction with the author. These points settled, I am called on to prepare models of the settings. These are submitted to the producer for his approval and, if necessary, alteration.

"Usually I get a chance of reading the play beforehand. In the case of Mr.





THREE STAGES IN THE PAINTING OF A SCENE.

"Following the sketching of the outlines the colours are put in, until gradually the canvas assumes the appearance of a giant picture of a group of trees."

Asche's productions, he himself reads the play to me, after which he leaves me to make my models in my own way. Not all producers, however, are so considerate!

"Sir Augustus Harris—Gus Harris, as he was familiarly known by all—would give the most minute instructions for a model and then countermand them almost in the same breath. And if a model didn't meet his approval he had no qualms about smashing it on the spot! I remember once, when he was contemplating producing a new play, he asked me to make a model at twenty-four hours' notice—quick work, I may say. As it happened, I had in my studio a model exactly similar to the one he wanted me to make—it was for an Indian mosque scene—one which he had condemned in no uncertain language about two years before.

"Thinking that by this time he would have forgotten its existence, I carefully dusted and touched up this old model, and the next day produced it for his inspection. Then I waited for him to commend me on my promptitude!

"But Harris remembered—and what he said to me, after wrecking the offending model with his fist, is, I regret to say, unsuitable for publication in THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

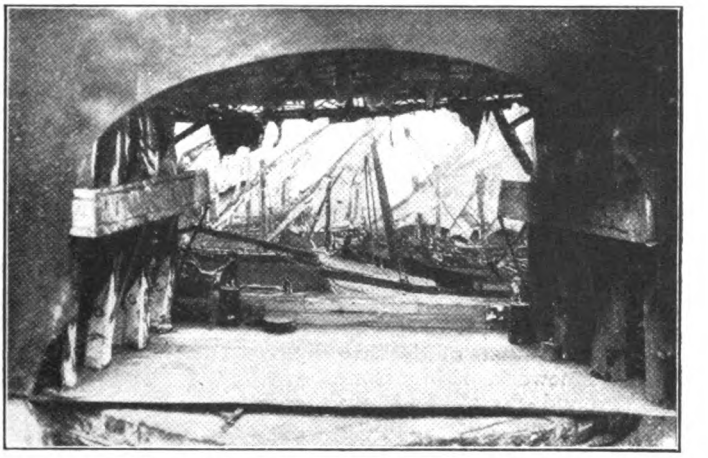
"On another occasion he was exceedingly angry because in the model scene of the interior of the old Charing Cross Station, looking down the line, with the bookstall as the centre-piece, I hadn't introduced Nelson's Column, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Clock Tower at Westminster, and one or two other notable London landmarks.

"'But,' I protested, 'it isn't possible to see either from inside the station!'

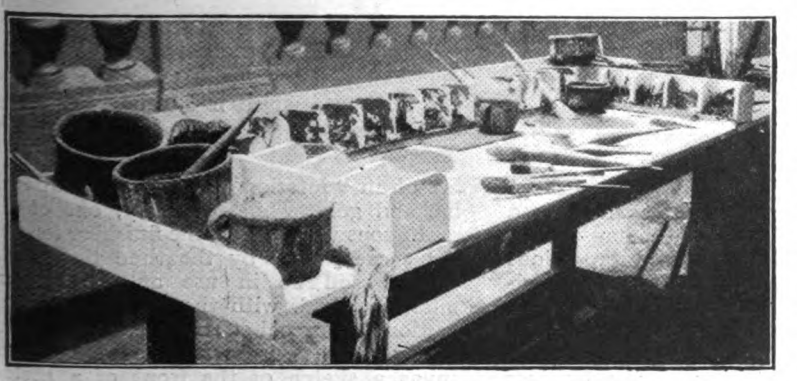
"'Never mind about that!' snapped Harris. 'Put 'em in—they'll never be any the wiser.'

"So, in deference to the great producer's showman instincts, I put the whole collection in the scene, and, for all I am aware, they—the public of the day—never were the wiser!

"The model scenes—stage settings in miniature—are all made to scale and are replicas, down to the last detail, of the settings they represent. In the case of representations of actual places, I collect my material for the models from the author or producer of the play, from photographs or other illustrations, from authoritative books, or from people who know the scenes. And when these sources of information and inspiration fail I study the scene for myself: my travels in search



Model of a scene for "Mecca," the play which is to succeed "Chu Chin Chow."



THE SCENE-PAINTER'S PALETTE.

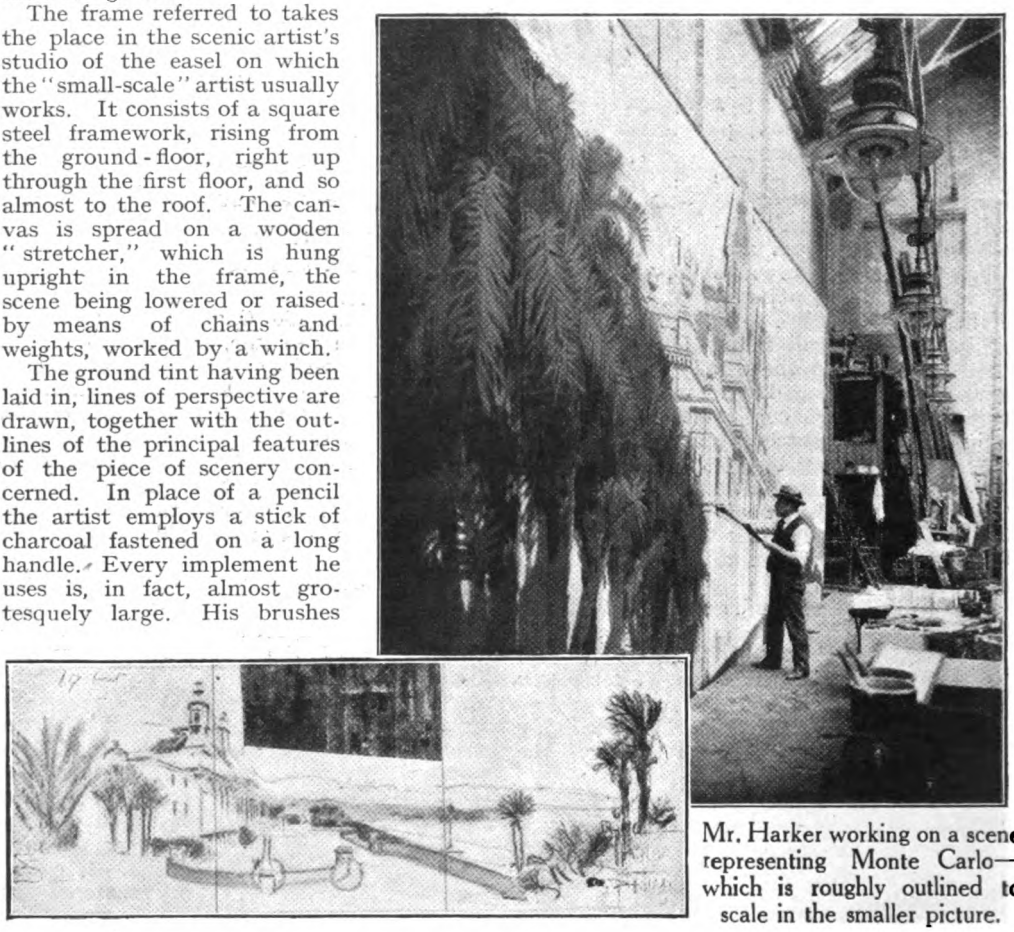
"It is a big, shallow tray, divided into many compartments, each containing a prodigious quantity of paint, while the brushes are the size of whitewash brushes."

of local colour have, in fact, taken me to many parts of the world.

"Once a model has been approved, I am able to go ahead with the making of the scenery. The model for that scene, for instance"—here Mr. Harker directed my attention to a second large canvas—"was passed a few days ago. The canvas is now fixed in the frame, preparatory to the ground tints being laid in."

The frame referred to takes the place in the scenic artist's studio of the easel on which the "small-scale" artist usually works. It consists of a square steel framework, rising from the ground-floor, right up through the first floor, and so almost to the roof. The canvas is spread on a wooden "stretcher," which is hung upright in the frame, the scene being lowered or raised by means of chains and weights, worked by a winch.

The ground tint having been laid in, lines of perspective are drawn, together with the outlines of the principal features of the piece of scenery concerned. In place of a pencil the artist employs a stick of charcoal fastened on a long handle. Every implement he uses is, in fact, almost grotesquely large. His brushes



Mr. Harker working on a scene representing Monte Carlo—which is roughly outlined to scale in the smaller picture.

are the size of whitewash brushes, except those used for fine work, his palette is a big shallow tray, divided into many compartments, each containing a prodigious quantity of paint, while if he uses a maul-stick—I did not see one on this occasion—I have no doubt that it is an out-size in drumsticks!

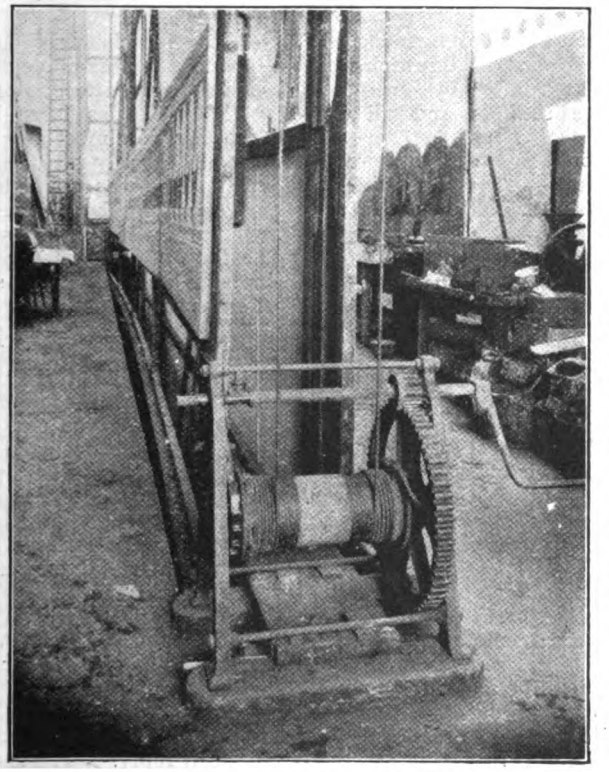
Following the sketching of the outlines the colours are put in, until gradually the canvas assumes the appearance of a giant picture of, say, a group of trees. Instead of a picture of trees, however, a life-like representation of them is required, and to obtain this the artist cuts out the shapes of the trunks, the branches, the twigs, and the foliage. In the theatre fragile pieces of scenery, such as twigs and leaves, are supported by fine fish-net, which is invisible from the auditorium.

Propped against the walls of the studio I noticed numerous fragmentary 'pieces," all in various stages of completion. There was part of an "interior" set, resplendent with blue and gold, while, close by, one of the artist's sons was putting the finishing touches to a scene which, by the time this article appears, will be in use at the London Coliseum. And, with the aid of the aforementioned charcoal stick, a studio hand was making on the virgin surface of a smaller canvas a sketch of the front of a Breton village shop, with sabots and highly-coloured fruit and vegetables as its chief wares.

"The big panel you see there," Mr. Harker pointed out, "is going to Australia with 'Chu Chin Chow.' Do you notice anything

unusual about the birds in its decorative scheme? They were intended to be peacocks, but peacocks are regarded with superstition in stage circles, so I substituted turkeys!

"A single piece of scenery may—and often does—take a month or six weeks of continuous work to complete it. The 'Garden' scene in 'The Garden of Allah'—in which, incidentally, my son Gordon has a part—took me nearer three months, but then I painted it myself, and I am no longer a young man! The scenery for 'Mecca,' part of which you see here—the play is to follow 'Chu Chin Chow'—will probably occupy four months in the making. The fact that four of my six sons are back again to help me has, of course, considerably increased my output.



Winch for winding up and down the huge canvas on which the scene-painter works.

"And now you ask, how did I become a scene-painter? To answer that question I must take you back to 1870, in which year—my fifteenth—I was apprenticed to my then future father-in-law, T. W. Hall, the scene-painter. Prior to that I had been on the stage for three years, with my parents, who were members of the old stock and touring companies. My mother was Maria O'Connor, a well-known Manchester actress and sister of John O'Connor, the artist. But stage life didn't appeal to me. I wanted to paint scenery, not merely stand in front of it. One day my mother took me to see the scene-painter at the old Prince of Wales's at Birmingham, to inquire if he would take me as an assistant.

"'Go over to the winch, boy,' said the painter, when my mother had finished her recital of my virtues, 'and wind up that cloth.'

"I tried my hardest and failed.

"'I'm sorry, ma'am,' said the painter, 'but I'm afraid your boy won't do. He hasn't got enough leverage.' And when my mother explained that I wanted to paint and not just do odd jobs, he shook his head and said that I should never become a scene-painter. 'A scene-painter *must* have leverage,' he emphasized, as he turned to go on with his work.

"In the days of my apprenticeship, Buckstone was manager at the Haymarket. He played many parts in his time, his favourite characters being, I remember, Sir Benjamin Backbite, Tony Lumpkin, Bob Acres, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek. He himself was what is known as a 'character.' Once, during a rehearsal at which I was present, he called loudly for a lady member of the cast who was missing. The explanation of her absence was that she was suffering from something akin to a broken heart, as the result of the callous behaviour of her lover.

"'You scoundrel!' roared Buckstone, suddenly turning on his terrified stage-carpenter. 'If you don't make it up with her before the day's out I'll kick you out of the theatre!'

"Whether the stage-carpenter obeyed or not I never knew, but as a matter of fact Buckstone himself was the culprit!

"Shortly after leaving my father-in-law I entered the Lyceum studio, under Hawes Craven. One day Irving called: 'I am looking for a young man named Harker,' he said, and when Craven presented me, Irving explained that in the days when he was struggling and unknown my father had done him a service, and that now he was able to do so he wished to return it. It was characteristic of Irving that he never forgot a kindness, however small.

"He talked to me about my work and my ambitions, and then, after having consulted Craven as to my ability, suggested that I should paint a scene for one of his productions of 'Macbeth.' Afterwards he engaged me to paint scenes for all his productions, and I did so until he died.

"I remember when he was rehearsing the production of 'Macbeth,' in question, his temper was slightly ruffled by an actor whose delivery was soulless and all but inaudible.

"'I wish you would put a little more go into your lines, Mr. ——,' Irving suddenly rapped out. 'Please remember you're not playing Little Bo-Peep!'

"AT another time, when Irving was playing Macbeth, the audience apparently got so depressed by the gloomy atmosphere of the play that when, towards the close, the curtain rolled up on a cheerful rustic scene, a galleryite gave vent to his relief by shouting 'Good old England!' while the rest of the audience applauded the sentiment so vociferously that the action of the play was momentarily held up. It was one of the most remarkable demonstrations I have ever seen.

"Speaking of fellow-craftsmen, I am reminded of the late Albert Callcott, who was by way of being a scenic artist of note. Callcott was absolutely wrapped up in his work; so much so that he apparently never thought or talked of anything else. On one occasion the studio hands were discussing Gladstone over their lunch.

"'Gladstone? Gladstone?' inquired Callcott, blankly. 'Who is he? *Can he paint?*'

"At another time a producer exclaimed, apropos a scene which Callcott had painted for him, 'Simply diabolical!'

"'Beg pardon,' said Callcott, abruptly, 'but it's nothing of the sort — it's pure Elizabethan.'

"In my hearing he once sneeringly referred to chess-players as 'great big men playing with little bits of wood!'

"More stories have been attributed to Tree than to almost any other famous actor. This one, at any rate, has the merit of being true! Tree was producing 'Twelfth Night,' just after he had experienced a series of reverses in his many stage ventures. At the time of which I speak he was, to use a common phrase, 'going slow' in the matter of expenditure.

"'Remember!' he said, after having arranged with me to paint the scenes, 'the keynote of this production is joy,' adding, in an aside, 'with economy!'

"I have told you two stories of Harris: a third has just occurred to me. A fellow-craftsman of mine had painted the scenery for 'Mother Goose,' the pantomime which Harris was producing that year. When the last scene was set for a rehearsal, he strode on the stage and expressed his unqualified disapproval of it.

"'This is the last scene in the piece," he said, angrily, to the studio hand who was putting the finishing touches to the setting, 'and it ought to be the best. As it is, it'll ruin the show!'

"'Don't you worry about that, sir,' came the gruff reply. 'The show'll be ruined long before that!'"

Model of a scene in Sir James Barrie's play, "Mary Rose."

Was She?

by H. deVERE STACPOOLE

ILLUSTRATED BY E·G·OAKDALE

I.

THIS story was constructed by me from details given by a person named Smith, Christian name John, a returned South African. Hypnotizing me on several occasions in the veranda of a South Coast hotel, he told me the story of his life in a backward and forward manner, which story was in the main the story of the woman who had made him and brought him prosperity. I am telling the story for the sake of the question that forms its title, leaving the answer to you.

Mr. Smith was born at Barking of middle-class parents, and went to work at an early age as assistant to a grocer; his business was to carry out parcels, and he was happy because he had no ambitions, and being of a timorous nature kept clear of disturbances and all conflict with authority. He was of the type that never rises much and rarely falls, and he might have been carrying parcels in Barking to this day had not Providence intervened in the form of swollen glands. Providence has all sorts of ways in its dealings with men, and one of its main businesses is the alteration of types. Smith left to himself would have died as he was made—only older; the swollen glands intervened. He was ordered to "live in the country," and the order coinciding with the requirements of a handy boy by his mother's half-brother, a small farmer in Essex, John was withdrawn from the grocery business and packed off by rail to Braintree, unresisting and blind to the Fates that were moving him as a cat in a basket.

Amber was the name of the farmer, and his farm was situated five miles from the town, and he took to John at first sight and promised to make a man of him. He dealt in pigs and horses, buying up scarecrows and fattening them and faking them and selling them in Braintree market at five hundred per cent. profit. He taught John how to ride, the mysteries of scab in sheep, the intricacies of "botts," pig-lore, and how to deal with Government inspectors; and so things went on for five happy and uneventful years, John swelling like a turnip and evolving into a fairly good-looking young man of twenty-three years, dressed in leggings, fresh of face, accepting everything that came to him, and promising to go on living just as he was, at one-pound-ten a week, till death culled him in the form of old age.

Providence had decided otherwise.

One summer Sunday afternoon, in a field two miles from Braintree, a girl saved his life from a bull. He was crossing the field, when he suddenly discovered that the bull had taken a fancy to him. A noise like the snort of a trombone made him turn.

Then he ran.

He made for the nearest hedge, where a girl in a light summer dress and shaded by a white parasol was sitting enjoying the beauty of the scenery. She rose up as the runners approached her, saw clearly that John would lose by a few yards, and intervened, helping him over the gate in the hedge and leaving the bull with a white parasol on his horns.

"She intervened, helping him over the gate in the hedge

John was shaking, but she was almost undisturbed. She was one of those people who seem absolutely devoid of fear or sense of danger, a mentality indicative of courage in its highest power, or simply complete want of imagination—who can tell ? But she was distressed for her parasol. It had cost her seven-and-elevenpence at Blott and Blott's, and she said so.

John said he would buy her another, and she did not refuse the offer, being a sensible and business-like person, and they walked back to Braintree, where he left her at her door—7, Miranda Terrace—with the permission to call upon her on the Sunday following with the new parasol. Her name was Mary Jane Summers. That was the beginning of John's love affair, if you can call it his.

It lasted two years, and then, an uncle dying and leaving her five hundred pounds, Miss Summers came to the decision that it had lasted long enough. She determined to marry John. She feared the future no more than she had feared the bull ; she had made her plans, and when she exhibited them they disclosed that plain common sense which is better than beauty and maybe rarer. She had determined that they must emigrate to South Africa. Five hundred pounds was of no use in England even in those days when the best butter was a shilling a pound, cattle food procurable, and the wages of a horseman fifteen shillings a week. She had worked everything out in her head : the wages he was receiving from his relation, the surety that there was no prospect of their being raised beyond a certain low level, the fact that he was worth much more than he was getting, the fact that he was not likely to get it in England, and the fact that he was likely to get it in South Africa. She had absorbed a good deal of information about the place, and she had a cousin living in

and leaving the bull with a white parasol on his horns."

Durban. She wrote to the cousin and got a satisfactory reply.

John, when all these things were disclosed to him, was astonished. He was of the type that never suspects it is being swindled till its pocket-book is gone. He looked on Amber as a benefactor. He was worth, taking his energy, sobriety, and general reliability into consideration, a hundred a year more to Amber than Amber was paying him. Yet he looked on Amber as a benefactor.

He was astonished to find that he was worth more than he fancied himself to be worth, that England was worked out, that the colonies were the only places where a man of energy and small means might find a certain livelihood and maybe a fortune.

She showed him all this.

He drew back at first, timid at the prospect of such a plunge ; but she had no fear. Then he consented, and she arranged about their marriage. They would get married without the least show or expense, and the African expedition would serve for a honeymoon ; her trousseau would be of the simplest. She gave details. She had studied the climate of South Africa and taken the conditions of life there on a farm on the veldt into her consideration when thinking out the trousseau. Though money was desperately essential and none too plentiful, she determined not to be married at a registrar's office but " respectably " in a church. John, who cared nothing for convention, was in favour of the registrar's, but she had an eye to the future and the foundation of a family, and she was determined that to begin well was everything ; she intended to build high, to be wealthy some day, and to reach great levels of Respectability, and a hole-and-corner marriage was no foundation for that design.

She made John buy a frock-coat and a pair of lavender trousers for the occasion, price

in those days four-pounds-ten, and after the marriage she arranged a small reception at her mother's house, 7, Miranda Terrace, where a number of highly respectable people gathered and gave them a send-off. The result, foreseen by this Bismarck in petticoats, was the feeling common to them both, that they had begun well and had already risen in the scale of life.

She had arranged the marriage to coincide with the sailing of the *Triton*, on which she had booked their passage second-class, and they left Braintree the same day for Southampton, where they spent the night at the best hotel, embarking next morning and sailing the same evening for a new world.

II.

SHE was very sea-sick, for, though sea-sickness is mostly a malady of the mind, even common sense cannot prevent it. She was ill for a week, and during that week John, who was a born sailor, was left to drift alone amongst the passengers. When she came on deck she found John in a corner with several evil-looking yegg-men secretly playing cards.

She pounced.

"How much have you lost ?" said she.

"I haven't lost," replied John. "I've won two-pounds-ten."

"Then put it in your pocket and come along with me," she replied.

The sons of Israel showed fight. She faced them fearlessly, just as she had faced the bull, threatened them with the "Captain," and took John off, just as she might have taken a purse. Then she extracted the two-pounds-ten from him and put it in her pocket.

He played cards no more on that ship for the very good reason that she kept an eye on him. Also no one would play with a man with such a wife. Other wives with husbands on board respected her, and she made several friends of returning South Africans, who turned up useful enough when they got to Durban and were on the look-out for cheap rooms.

At Durban she accompanied John to the office of Mr. Goldberg, to whom she had been recommended by her cousin.

Goldberg was a land agent and knew all about South African farming that was to be known. He sat in an office with maps behind him on the wall. His hair was as black as ebony shavings and as oily as Satan's palm. He wore gold *pince-nez*, and had a thick voice ; also a big diamond ring.

Mrs. Smith sat and looked at Goldberg and listened whilst John told of his requirements, and she picked up quite a lot of information whilst Goldberg talked, also she came to the conclusion that she did not trust him, and that his fine office and diamond ring were indicative of a wealth to which she did not care to add her contribution.

She was absolutely ignorant of the South African world—of any world, indeed, beyond the world contained in a five-mile radius of Braintree, but her common sense warned her, and she took John off, promising to think things over and call another day.

Next morning they left for Johannesburg, following a lead given to her by one of the friends she had picked up on the *Triton*, and here with the help of an hotel-keeper, and without paying agent's fees, they picked up some land away north near a place called Rupertsburg—if I remember the name properly.

These were the days before the Boer War, and there was more game about then, including big beasts, to say nothing of pythons ; but Mrs. Smith had no fear of danger, and five miles north-west of the little town of Rupertsburg they took up their quarters in an old farmhouse set in an infinity of sunshine and silence, and no sooner had they settled down than Mrs. Smith discovered they had made a mistake. It had not been her deal ; John had insisted on being master for once and had closed on the place. I think it was ostriches he intended to grow ; at all events, the place was not suitable, and they only stayed there six months, moving back south and making a small fortune in a way that has nothing to do with this story, which is entirely concerned with the character of Mrs. Smith.

Having discovered communications difficult, labour unsatisfactory, locusts frequent, droughts a matter of course, and a python in possession of the stable, she did not complain, never once said "I told you so," but just settled down to make the best of it.

The python sitting like a demon on its clutch of eggs—it was hatching—did not daunt her. She supervised the shooting of it, had the eggs destroyed, and ordered the place to be cleaned. Acting on the advice of female friends, she always went about with a revolver strapped to her belt, and the Kaffirs, after one week of her management, were different Kaffirs from what they had been, and called her "Baas" mentally if not vocally. She was sunburnt, she wore a short skirt, her sleeves rolled up, and a revolver at her belt ; yet she was just the same individual as the girl who had sat beneath the hedge that summer Sunday afternoon in the field near Braintree, just as womanly, as decided, as brave and commonsensical.

In a fortnight, working the unfortunate Kaffirs as whitewashers, carpenters, roof-menders, and housemaids, she had the place in order and fit to be lived in.

Sometimes she would go to the little town five miles away to purchase things at the store run by a German named Bloom. A German of the old type, spectacles and all complete, a philosophical man who came to have a high respect for this customer, a respect based on the wisdom exhibited by her orders. The Boer farmers' wives used to buy in small quantities, either from niggardliness or a dislike of spending too much money at one time, or some more recondite reason, but Mrs. Smith bought in bulk, and so saved journeys and the risk of disappointment, and paid on the nail and so got a discount.

So things went on, the monotony varied by the coming of a flight of locusts and by a thunderstorm that sounded exactly like the end of the world, in the middle of which, whilst John was remembering past sins and putting up silent prayers, Mrs. Smith was putting out tubs to catch the rain-water.

The next incident after that was the saving of John's life from an ostrich.

Now, ostrich farming sounds safe and easy work, but in reality it is equivalent to the tending of buff Orpingtons by a man seven inches high ; it is sometimes free from danger, and sometimes it isn't.

Hailed from the house by the cry of " Baas ! Baas ! " she rushed out to find John on the ground, an ostrich dancing on him, and the Kaffirs looking on. She saved the situation by her pluck and with the revolver.

" Lord, you have the pluck ! " said John one day when he was convalescing.

He was about right. Nothing could frighten this woman—and yet one day it came about that she was frightened, badly frightened, and it came about in this wise.

III.

ONE morning John saddled his horse and rode off to the little town on some business or another, leaving Mrs. Smith alone ; the Kaffirs were away on some other business, and she was alone, quite alone in the house in the middle of that burning and windless solitude stretching from where you please to Bechuanaland

She was engaged in dusting, and in an irritable mood. There was one insoluble problem always being set for Mrs. Smith by this old farmhouse, the problem of " Where does the dust come from ? " It seemed to blow in when there was no wind, and when there was a wind it blew in worse. It settled on everything in an equitable manner : on the kitchen table and the crockery dogs—wedding presents conveyed unsmashed seven thousand miles—on the pie in course of construction and when cooked, on the plates on the dresser, on the dresser, on the milk-pan and the milk in the pan. Dust had always been her enemy, it was one of the few things that could put her out, and this morning as she dusted the crockery dogs she was put out, and she could not swear. When women learn to swear man and other animals will undoubtedly have an easier time and spring cleanings be robbed of much of their misery. Swearing being impossible, she went on with her work with increased energy, and was just finishing off the left-hand crockery dog when a sound from outside told her that someone was at the back door. She thought it was one of the Kaffirs, and cried " Come in," got no response, left her dusting, crossed the kitchen, and, duster in hand, opened the door.

Standing full fronting her was a lion !

The African lions, says an old natural historian, are of two races—one yellowish, the other brown ; whilst the Dutch colonists speak of the blue and black kinds.

This was neither a blue nor a black lion, nor exactly yellow nor brown. Sandy-coloured, perhaps, a male, and very large ; dusty, too, from its travels ; and never, perhaps, had the essential male and the essential female met so squarely face to face and so suddenly as when they stood now facing one another across the door-sill.

But Mrs. Smith knew nothing of essential males or females and little of lions. She had seen pictures of them in her school-books, and on a visit to London she had seen the lions in Trafalgar Square. She had a vague idea that lions eat people, and that constituted her whole knowledge of the most formidable of the species *Felidæ*.

What she saw now recalled nothing of all that. She saw before her a large, honest-looking, and rather foolish face, fuzzy and bearded, amber-eyed, dusty, and completing, as only an intruding male could complete, the sum of her irritation that had been growing all the morning.

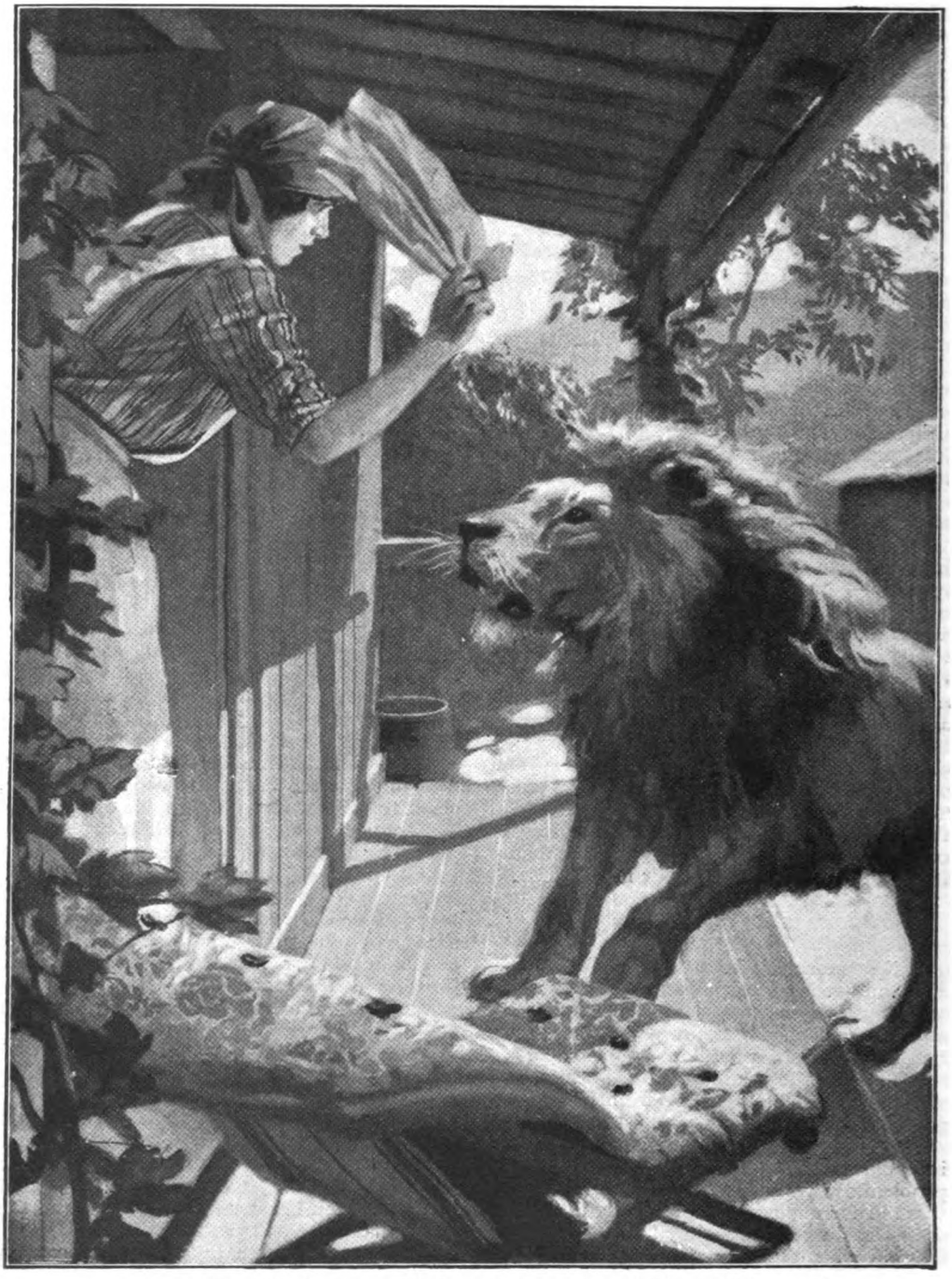
She hit the face with her duster and said " Scat ! "

Then, as it ambled off, she saw the tufted tail, and the whole figure called up in her mind the word " lion."

She closed the door and bolted it, and went on with her work with a better heart. Her irritation was somehow relieved. She had almost sworn, for one thing, and the lion had given her something to think about other than dust and pie-making.

She thought quite a lot about lions as she put the duster aside and began the preparations for dinner. She remembered the tales about their eating people, and came to the swift conclusion—leaving out man-eaters—that lions are harmless.

The thing had inspired no fear in her mind, that logical mind which derived perhaps



"She hit the face with her duster and said 'Scat!'"

half its inspiration from instinct. She was not frightened by the business, but she was still to be badly frightened. In what way? Wait.

IV.

JOHN that morning, having ridden into the town, called at Bloom's store, and found the German in his shirt-sleeves

undoing parcels that had just arrived by ox-wagon.

John had been commissioned to buy pepper and tin-tacks, and Bloom, the universal provider, looking at the piece of paper on which Mrs. Smith had written her requirements, noted the amount of pepper required—one pound.

"She says she doesn't always want to be sending in for things," said John, "and it's better to have enough to start with."

"She's a sensible woman," said Bloom. "These —— Dutch fraus dey break a plate and send to me for one plate, break another and send to me for another, and zo dey go on, journeys all the time and waste of time, and zo it goes on—as if they lift round the corner to send, and not miles away. Now, what I say is, a woman's house ought to be her store, everyding to hand and enough of it. These —— Dutch fraus they send to me for half a pound of washing-soda, please, Mr. Bloom. Mrs. Smith she orders a stone.

"Well, now, dis pepper, I haff only a pound in the establishment, but she is welcome to haff—dese are the din-tacks. Vill you not join me in a glass of Vanderhum?"

John did—and with the parcels in his pocket and the Vanderhum in his veins mounted his horse and started back for home in an optimistic mood that included himself and the world and the awful desolation of the sun-smitten landscape.

Arrived at the farm, he stabled his horse and rubbed it down; then he entered the house, where Mrs. Smith was taking the pie from the oven. The dinner-table was laid and they sat down, John putting the pepper and tacks on the dresser and giving details of his journey, voluble for once in his life owing to the Vanderhum.

Towards the close of the meal Mrs. Smith, remembering the lion and managing to get in a word, said:—

"Oh, I forgot to tell you, a lion has been."

John dropped his knife and fork.

"Great Scot, Mary, what are you saying?—a lion has *been*—when?"

"He came to the back door, and I opened it."

"You did? Opened it? A lion? What did you do?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"I didn't know what it was for a minute, and I hit it with the duster, and it went off."

"Hit it with the duster—a lion!"

"Oh, go on with your dinner—I'm in a hurry to clear up. There was no harm in the thing, I could tell that at a glance."

"But where did it go to—didn't you look?"

"Lord bless the man, what do you think my time's worth with all the things I have to do? It went round the corner of the house, and I shut the door. It's far enough by this, I expect."

"There's no knowing," said John. "It's ten to one it will come back, at night most likely."

He finished his meal and went off to the stable, where he had some carpentering work on hand.

He had been working an hour or so and was putting down his saw to wipe his brow, when a scream from the house made him fling the saw aside and rush to the door.

V.

IT was his wife's voice and she was screaming for help.

The door of the house was open—he had left it open—the lion had come back and it had got her. There could be no doubt of that.

For one terrific instant John stood paralyzed. Love on one side of him, Death on the other. He was a timorous man, and to enter that house and front a lion, one had to be as brave as a lion.

In the beat of a pendulum and as the past comes to the drowning, his whole past stood before him in one picture. The bull she had saved him from—the ostrich. Then, just as though her splendid character and courage had been injected into his mind by a squirt, he sprang to the house-door.

The living-room was empty, the bedroom door open. He picked up his gun that was standing by the wall and rushed to the bedroom door.

Mrs. Smith, wide-eyed and pale of face, was standing on the bed, and in the corner of the room opposite her was crouched the enemy, bright-eyed and long-tailed, and evidently preparing for a rush.

HALF an hour later John, on a perspiring horse, drew up at Bloom's store and, leaving the horse tethered to the post, entered.

"My wife wants six mouse-traps," said John.

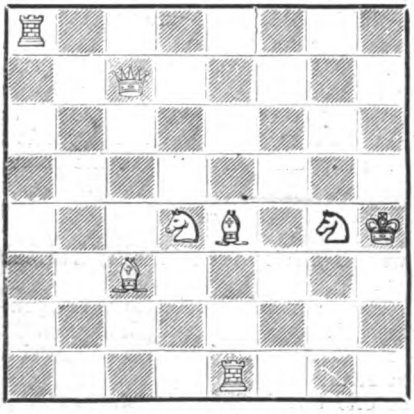
"Six?" said Bloom. "Zo—ah, well, she's a sensible woman."

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

535.—THE GUARDED CHESSBOARD.

A VALUED correspondent in the United States recently asked me if I could give him a solution to the following problem: To place two rooks, two knights



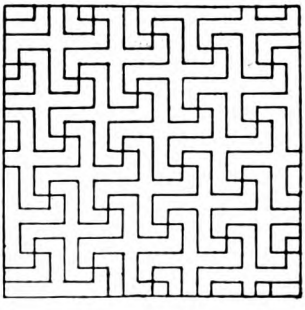
two bishops, the king, and the queen on the chessboard so that all the unoccupied squares are attacked and all the pieces are guarded. "Somebody in this country," he adds, "has obtained a solution with the exception that the king and the queen are not guarded." He gives no clue as to the author, and does not state whether the ideal solution is known to be obtainable. I sent him my own solution, as above, which it will be seen equals the American one, the king and the queen alone being unprotected by another piece; but I also gave him a solution in which only one of the eight pieces is unguarded. Can the reader do this, or find an ideal arrangement with every piece guarded by another?

536.—DIVIDING BY 37.

I WANT to know whether the number 49,129,308,213 is exactly divisible by 37, or, if not, what is the remainder when so divided. How may I do this quite easily without any process of actual division whatever? It can be done by inspection in a few seconds—if you know how.

537.—A SWASTIKALAND MAP.

HERE is a little puzzle that the reader will probably think he has solved at almost the first glance. But will he be correct? Swastikaland is divided into counties in the manner shown in our illustration. The Lord High Keeper of the



Maps was ordered so to colour this map of the country that there should be a different colour on each side of every boundary line. What was the smallest possible number of colours that he required?

538.—A DEAL IN EGGS.

A POULTRY-FARMER recently sold his stock of eggs in the following manner: To his first customer he sold one-half of his stock and half an egg; to the second customer he sold one-third of the remainder and a third of an egg; to the third customer he sold a quarter of what remained and a quarter of an egg; and to the last man he sold one-fifth of what was left and a fifth of an egg. All these sales were by the exact dozen, at the rate of five shillings per dozen eggs. Then he disposed of the remainder in thirteens, at five shillings for every thirteen eggs. What is the smallest possible number of eggs he could have sold, and what sum did he receive for them? Of course, as in all such dealings with eggs, not a single egg was broken.

539.—HALF THE ALPHABET.

A CORRESPONDENT kindly gives me the name of a hamlet in Lincolnshire composed of thirteen letters—all different. That is to say, it contains just half the letters of the complete alphabet. Can the reader find this hamlet, or, better, discover some other word containing thirteen letters all different? Is there such an English word in existence, apart from place-names?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

530.—THE SIX COTTAGERS.

IF the distances between the cottages are as follows, in the order given, any distance from one mile up to twenty inclusive may be found as from one cottage to another: 1, 9, 2, 3, 3, 3 miles round the circular road.

531.—A LITTLE SHOPPING.

IT appears that the lady was buying fancy pastries at a confectioner's. Three at 4d. and four at 3d. would be two shillings, and she placed a florin on the counter in payment. Four at 4d. and three at 3d. would, of course, cost another penny. If the purchase had not been under one guinea, the answer three at 14s. 4d. and four at 14s. 3d., with a £5-piece tendered in payment, would also answer the question.

532.—WORD-BUILDING.

THE words in their order are RE, ARE, AVER, AVERT, STARVE, SERVANT, VETERANS, ADVENTERS, ADVENTURES, ADVENTURERS, UNDERSERVANT, STRAND VENTURE.

533.—BOTTLE AND CORK.

OF course, the answer is one farthing.

534.—AN ENIGMA.

THE individual was Lot's wife.

Your eyes would glisten too!

——if you saw a big oval tin of Mackintosh's Toffee de Luxe awaiting you when you got home for the week end.

Be the surprise-maker for your family and take a tin home yourself.

Just because only what is pure and good goes into the making of Mackintosh's Toffee de Luxe it has an irresistible appeal for all who have healthy appetites for delicious, wholesome toffee.

Mackintosh's Toffee de Luxe is made in the following varieties: Plain Peppermint, Treacle, Cocoa, Cocoanut, or all Assorted.

Sold loose by weight and in ½-lb., 1-lb., and 4-lb. Family Tins by Confectioners Everywhere.

Try also Chocolate Toffee de Luxe

Some Old-Fashioned Beauty Recipes

Simple and Effective

BY

MIMOSA

The Magnetism of Beautiful Hair

BEAUTIFUL hair adds immensely to the personal magnetism of both men and women. Actresses and smart women are ever on the lookout for any harmless thing that will increase the natural beauty of their hair. The latest method is to use pure stallax as a shampoo on account of the peculiarly glossy, fluffy, and wavy effect which it leaves. As stallax has never been used much for this purpose it comes to the chemist only in ¼-lb. sealed original packages, enough for twenty-five or thirty shampoos. A teaspoonful of the fragrant stallax granules, dissolved in a cup of hot water, is more than sufficient for each shampoo. It is very beneficial and stimulating to the hair, apart from its beautifying effect.

Permanently Removing Superfluous Hair

HOW to permanently, not merely temporarily, remove a downy growth of disfiguring superfluous hair, is what many women wish to know. It is a pity that it is not more generally known that pure powdered pheminol, obtainable from the chemist's, may be used for this purpose. It is applied directly to the objectionable hair. The recommended treatment not only instantly removes the hair, leaving no trace, but is designed also to kill the roots completely.

Don't Have Grey Hair

GREY hair is often a serious handicap to both men and women while still in the prime of life. Hair dyes are not advisable because they are always obvious, inconvenient, and often downright injurious. Few people know that a very simple formula, which is easily made up at home, will turn the hair back to a natural colour in a perfectly harmless manner. You have only to get two ounces of tammalite concentrate from your chemist and mix it with three ounces of bay rum to prove this. Apply this simple and harmless lotion for a few nights to the hair with a small sponge, and the greyness will gradually disappear. The lotion is neither sticky nor greasy, and has been proved over and over again for generations past by those in possession of the formula.

To Have Smooth, White Skin, Free From Blemish

DOES your skin chap or roughen easily, or become unduly red or blotchy? Let me tell you a quick and easy way to overcome the trouble and keep your complexion beautifully white, smooth, and soft. Just get some ordinary mercolized wax at the chemist's and use a little before retiring as you would use cold cream. The wax, through some peculiar action, flecks off the rough discoloured or blemished skin. The worn-out cuticle comes off just like dandruff on a diseased scalp, only in almost invisible particles. Mercolized wax simply hastens Nature's work, which is the rational and proper way to attain a perfect complexion, so much sought after, but very seldom seen. The process is perfectly simple and quite harmless.

Blackheads Fly Away

A PRACTICALLY instantaneous remedy for blackheads, greasy skins, and enlarged pores, recently discovered, is now coming into general use in the boudoir. It is very simple, harmless, and pleasant. Drop a stymol tablet, obtained at the chemist's, in a tumbler full of hot water. After the effervescence has subsided bathe the face in the liquid, using a small sponge or soft cloth. In a few minutes dry the face and the offensive blackheads will come right off on the towel. Also the large oily pores immediately close up and efface themselves naturally. The greasiness disappears and the skin is left smooth, soft, and cool. This simple treatment is then repeated a few times at intervals of four or five days to ensure the permanence of the result.

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Ladies' Coats, 38/6 up.
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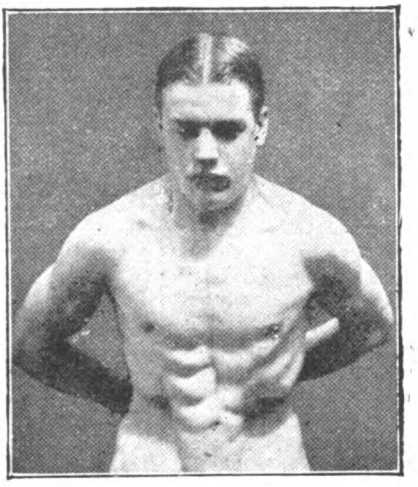

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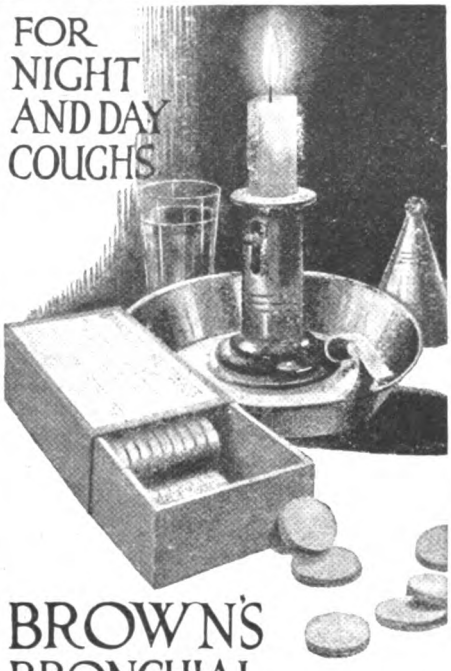

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It costs nothing to receive my book. It tells of my own experience and of how you may save yourself or another. Mine is **a genuine, reliable, and safe treatment,** that can be taken in one's own home privately. The treatment is supplied under legal guarantee, involving no obnoxious restrictions. I count friends by the thousands—men and women who are known to me only by correspondence—who praise the Woods Treatment for the benefit it has done them, or others near and dear.

FREE BOOK

I will send you my book in plain, sealed envelope promptly, post paid, on receipt of your request. I appeal especially to those who have wasted money on ineffective remedies. Correspondence strictly confidential. Address:

Edw. J. Woods, Ltd., 10, Norfolk St. (353 A.F.), London, W.C.2

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is but a moderate estimate of the amount paid yearly for cycle repairs. You can save your share of this money by using

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All mechanics WILL have Fluxite because it

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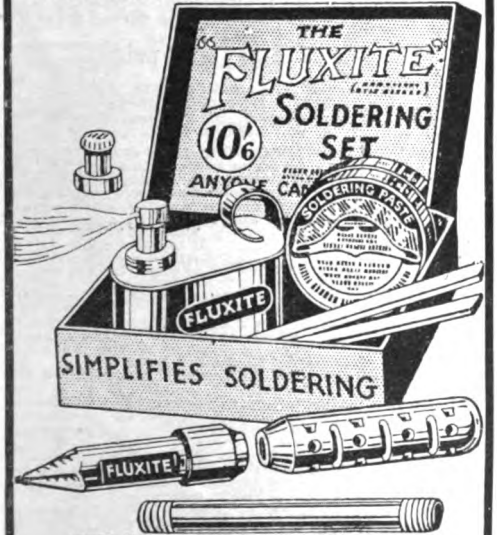
Ask your Ironmonger or Hardware Dealer to show you the neat little Fluxite Soldering Set. It is perfectly simple to use, and will last for years in constant use. All Hardware and Ironmongery Stores sell Fluxite in tins, price **8d.**, **1/4** & **2/8**. *BUY A TIN TO-DAY.*



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CURATIVE ELECTRIC TREATMENT AT HOME!

Wonderful Invention that Gives Amazing Vitality and Strength.

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ARE you weak, despondent, lacking in energy, suffering from lack of vitality? Then read of the remarkable success of the famous Pulvermacher Electrological Inventions, which, in the privacy of your own home, re-establish a splendid condition of manly strength and nerve vigour.

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The Pulvermacher Appliances are the only inventions for the administration of Curative Electricity, endorsed by over fifty leading Doctors and by the Official Academy of Medicine of Paris.

simply by adopting a short course of treatment with the Pulvermacher Electrological Appliances. No need to visit any specialist's institute, no need to pay continuous fees, no expert aid is necessary. YOU CAN CURE YOURSELF, inexpensively and permanently, at home, by wearing one of these appliances. They triumph over illness even when all other remedies fail.

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If you will write to-day you can receive gratis and post free a most fascinating book, in which this new and wonderfully successful method of overcoming all nervous troubles is plainly described.

We invite you, if you possibly can, to call, and without any obligation examine the Pulvermacher Appliances and enjoy a special consultation with the Head Superintendent. If you cannot call, **send your name and address on the form below,** and the special volume, "A Guide to Health and Strength," will be forwarded to you post paid.

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STRAND MAG., *Feb.*, 1921.

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For Hands, Skin and Complexion

In *all* weathers the skin and complexion can be kept *wonderfully clear and soft* by the regular use of Icilma Cream.

No other toilet cream can possibly do as much for you, for Icilma Cream is *completely different* from all others.

Creamy, fragrant, foamy and non-greasy it is a delight to use. Even the first touch improves, and only regular use is necessary to get the *beautiful clear fresh skin* that men admire. *Guaranteed Pre-War Quality.*

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BEAUTY BOOKLET with full information about the hair and skin and FREE sample of Icilma Cream, the World's leading toilet cream, sent on receipt of a postcard. International Icilma Trading Co., Ltd. (Dept. 14), 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, King's Road, St. Pancras N.W.1.

Icilma

Cream

Price 1/3, large pot 2/- everywhere. Flesh-tinted Cream, 1/9 per pot.

Use it daily and look your best

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Every asthma sufferer should know that Potter's Asthma Cure gives instant relief. The moment you inhale it the strangling coughing stops, and you can breathe easily.

POTTER'S Asthma Cure

is the best remedy for bronchitis of children.

Have you been a martyr to asthma and bronchitis for years? If so, keep a tin handy and use when required. Attacks will be prevented and peaceful sleep ensured. Potter's Asthma Cure is supplied by all chemists, herbalists and stores for **1/6**, or post free **1/9**, from **Potter & Clarke, Ltd., 60, Artillery Lane, London, E.1.**

A Free Trial of Potter's Asthma Cure, together with a little book, "Are you Asthmatic?" will be sent if you forward a 2d. stamp and

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Strand Magazine.

HEALTHY WOMEN

must wear "healthy" Corsets, and the "Natural Ease" Corset is the most healthy of all. Every wearer says so. While moulding the figure to the most delicate lines of feminine grace they vastly improve the health.

The CORSET of HEALTH

The Natural Ease Corset, Style 2.

10/11 pair. *Postage abroad extra.*

Complete with Special Detachable Suspenders.

Stocked in all sizes from 20 to 30. Made in finest quality Drill.

SPECIAL POINTS of INTEREST.

No bones or steels to drag, hurt, or break. No lacing at the back. Made of strong, durable drill of finest quality, with special suspenders, detachable for washing purposes.

It is laced at the sides with elastic lacings to expand freely when breathing.

It is fitted with adjustable shoulder straps.

It has a short (9 in.) busk in front which ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks and Eyes.

It can be easily washed at home, having nothing to rust or tarnish.

"The History of the Health Corset may be set out in a few lines—it is founded on Science, improved by Experience, and beautified by Art; its perfection is the result of the co-operation of the Artist and the Expert."

These Corsets are specially recommended for ladies who enjoy cycling, tennis, dancing, golf, &c., as there is nothing to hurt or break. Singers, Actresses and Invalids will find wonderful assistance, as they enable them to breathe with perfect freedom. All women appreciate the "Natural Ease" Corsets. They yield freely to every movement of the body, and whilst giving beauty of figure are the most comfortable Corsets ever worn.

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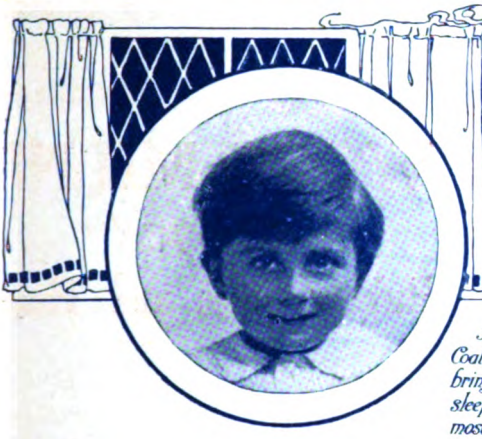

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WRIGHT'S COAL TAR SOAP

Protects from Infection.

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PATENT AUTOMATIC

Water & Oil Finder

Mansfield's Patent Automatic Water and Oil Finders

are used by leading Governments, Railway Companies, Land Companies, Well-Boring Engineers, and others.

A Colonial Engineer writes: "Since purchasing the Instrument I have selected 300 sites, most of which I have either bored upon with our own plants, or had bored by sub-contractors. In every instance we have been successful."

Prices of the instrument are as follows:

£30	locating at all depths up to	200ft.
£50	,, ,, ,, ,,	500ft.
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***£175**	,, ,, ,, ,,	3,500ft.

*Also used for Oil Finding.

Delivery at Colonial or Foreign Seaports £3 extra.

We undertake the location of sites and boring at lump sum prices under guarantee of

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Particulars on application to

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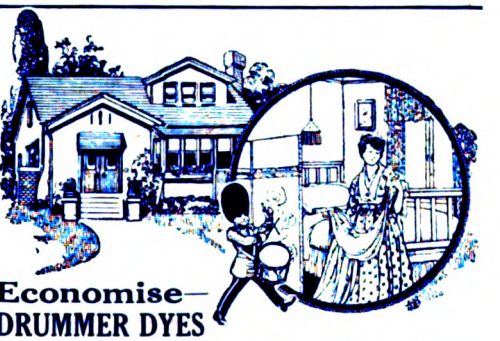

Economise— DRUMMER DYES

Wherever among the washing things of your wardrobe or household draperies you find faded, stained, soiled shabbiness, try Drummer-Dyeing. Silk, Cotton, and Wool take Drummer Dyes perfectly: success is assured if the simple directions given with each packet are just carefully followed. but

Never say "Dye," say "Drummer."

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One Dye for all Fabrics. So Easy to Use.

Sold by Grocers, Stores, Chemists, and Oilmen everywhere in these colours: Light Blue, Saxe Blue, Navy, Light Green, Dark Green, Emerald, Myrtle, Brown, Nigger Brown, Red, Cardinal, Maroon, Rust, Shell Pink, Daffodil, Heliotrope, Mauve, Grey and Black.

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Sole Makers: WM. EDGE & SONS, Ltd., Bolton.

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Made in Black Rubber.

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Rubber Soles and Heels

Ask your bootman to fit you a pair—they are the pinnacle of comfort and the acme of economy. They save your nerves from shock and also save you many repair bills. They keep you dry footed, warm footed, and free from fatigue. Remarkably light and unobtrusive, they are ideal for town or country wear.

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Children's & Youths', according to size.

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Let your Bootman fit them. There are many imitations of Wood-Milne but no equal.

Made in Black Rubber.

The EVIDENCE for FAIRIES By A. CONAN DOYLE

WITH NEW FAIRY PHOTOGRAPHS

A Man's Drink:
Fry's Pure Breakfast Cocoa

See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

STORIES by
MORLEY ROBERTS
E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM
ETHEL M. DELL
AND
P. G. WODEHOUSE

March, 1921.

— A —
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No. 363
VOL 61

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TWINK is a most successful combination of various attractive shades of dye with the well-known Lux soap flakes, a unique and excellent means of dyeing at home all kinds of wearing and furnishing fabrics.

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There are **18** *beautiful shades of* **TWINK**

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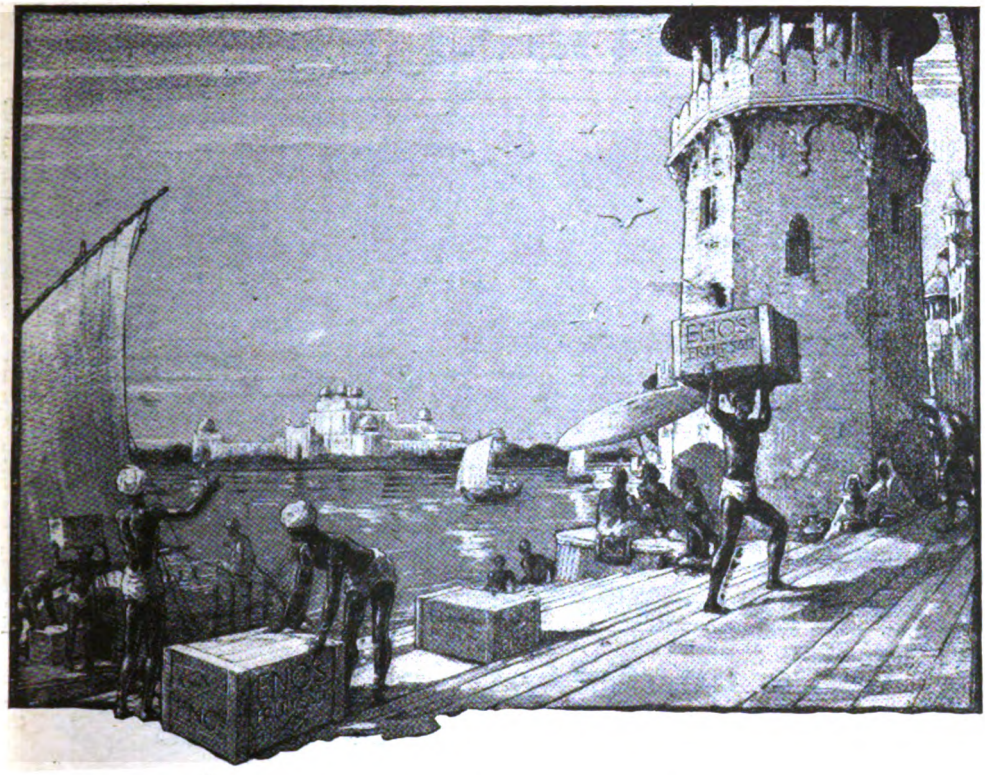

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ENO is sold by Chemists and Stores throughout the world. If you have any difficulty in obtaining regular supplies, please send us the name and address of your nearest Chemist or Store.

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If you will make an effort to qualify for an executive position in business the School of Accountancy will stand by you until you succeed

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Exquisitely pure and luxuriously perfumed, used by the leaders of Taste and Fashion for more than a Century.

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Of all Chemists & Stores & from
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and well they know it, crowding round the orange tin with the parrot and Knut on it. SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM is a toffee indescribably delicious—a modern luxury with the old-time "melts in the mouth" flavour. As a refresher it is unequalled, and it is as sustaining as it is pure and wholesome. Get a tin to-day. It will add greatly to your enjoyment.

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See that name is on each piece of paper in which Toffee is wrapped.

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LOOK at the heels of a pair of 'Saxone' Boots. They are made of straight firm layers of tested leather. The two bottom layers are extraordinarily tough and will take the very hardest wear.

Yet appearance and elasticity are never sacrificed. 'Saxone' Boots always *combine* wearing quality and comfort; and the conscientious work that is put into *each pair* is justified by the unique place they hold to-day.

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And all large towns.

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Packed in varying degrees of strength to suit every class of Smoker.

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Luxurious and soundly upholstered. Woollen Flocks. Coppered Steel Springs. British Webs. Seats, Backs and Arms all well sprung. Covered in a variety of French and other Tapestries. Patterns submitted for Customer's selection.

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

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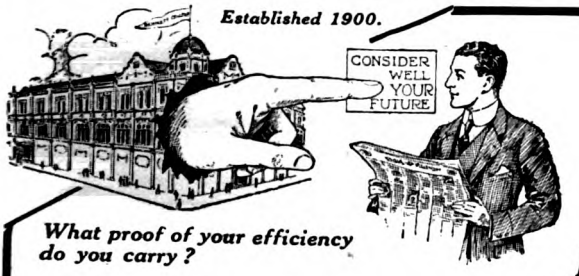

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Therefore, Turf Cigarettes—of the same Quality which is so appreciated in the larger sizes—are *also* now put up in JUBILEE Size at 10 for 6d.

Made by Alexander Boguslavsky, Ltd., 55, Piccadilly, London, W.

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with the mark of the Winged Horse is the packet you should look for. Then you will be sure of getting a high-grade Cigarette.

You will probably like them better than any Cigarette you ever tried, and you can offer them to your friends with confidence. They will respect your judgment.

Think of the packet; QUALITY. Think of the price: 10 for 6d. Smoke one. You may then forget the PRICE—you will always remember the QUALITY.

TURF

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Her Pearls

caused a flutter of excitement amongst her friends and acquaintances.

THE wonderful necklet was the centre of attraction and admiration.

SHE rejoiced in arousing their curiosity—but finally imparted her secret. They were not real, as all believed—they were

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INVESTIGATE THE MERITS OF CIRO PEARLS BY MEANS OF

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On receipt of One Guinea, we will send you a necklet of No. 1 quality Ciro Pearls, 16ins. long (gold clasp 2s. 6d. extra, and other lengths at proportionate rates), or a Ring, Brooch, Ear-rings, or any other Jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money.

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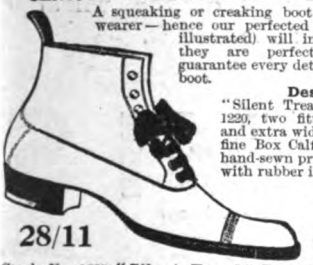

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"Silent Tread" Bal, Stock No. 1220, two fittings, full medium and extra wide. Uppers of super-fine Box Calf and made on the hand-sewn principle. Heel fitted with rubber inset.

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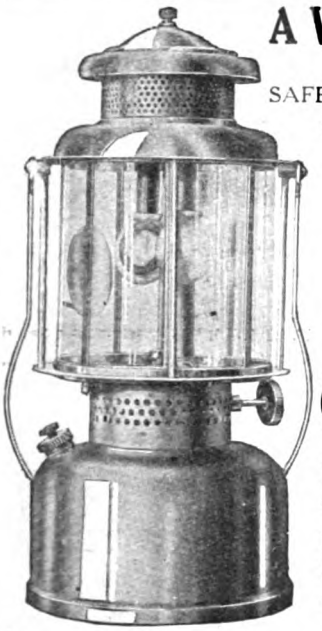

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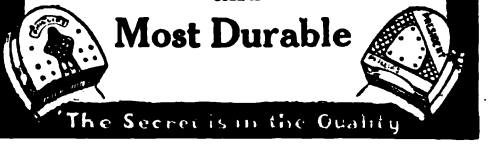

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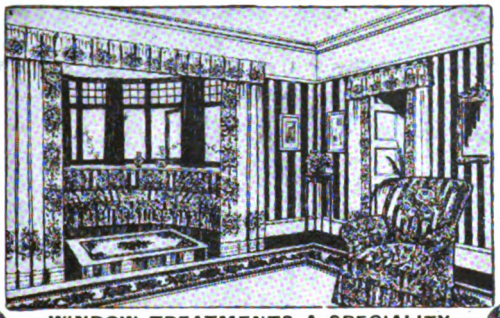

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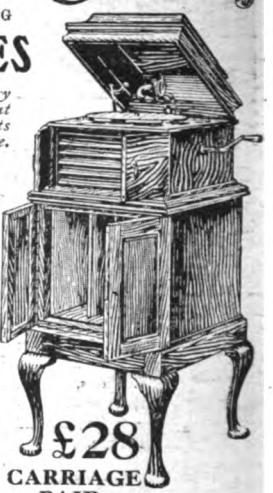

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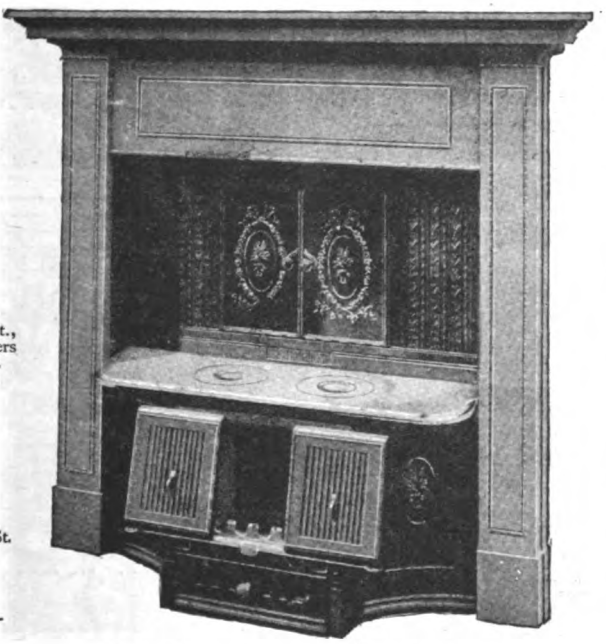

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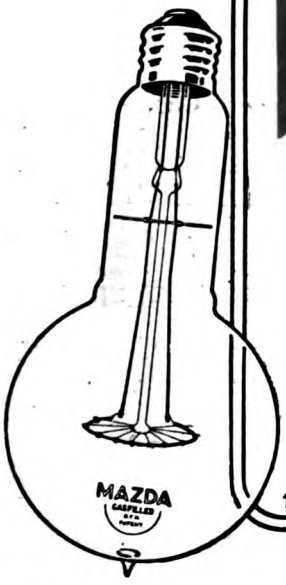

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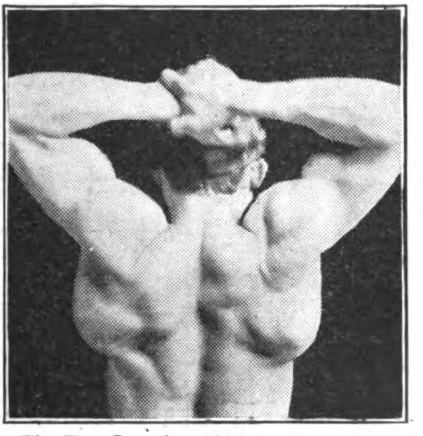
Measurements.

Chest, 37in. (expanded). Neck, 14¾in. Biceps, R. 12in., L. 11¾in. Thighs, 20in. Calf, 12½in.



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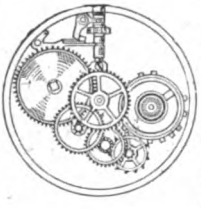

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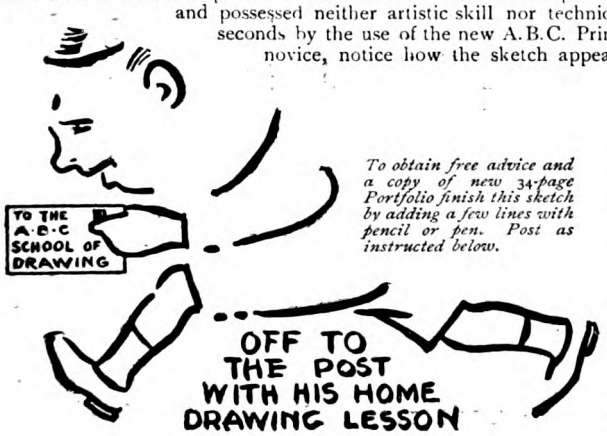

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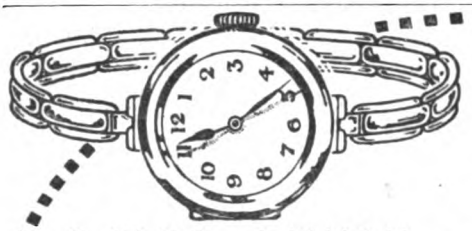

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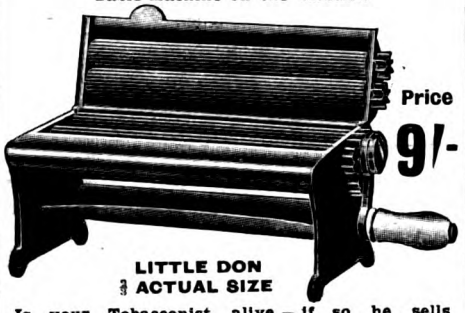

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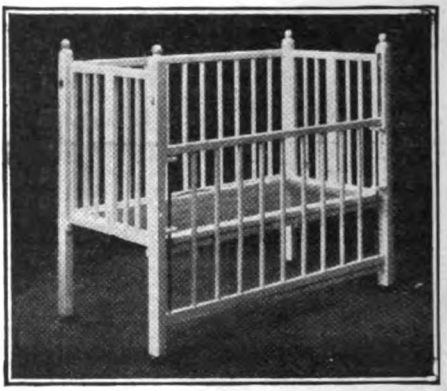

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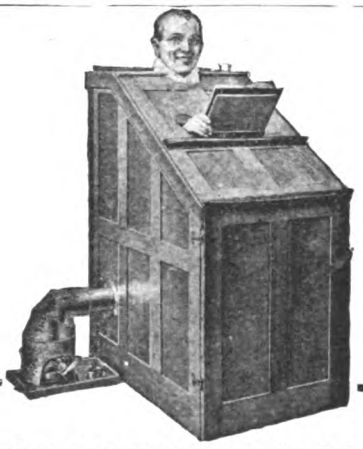

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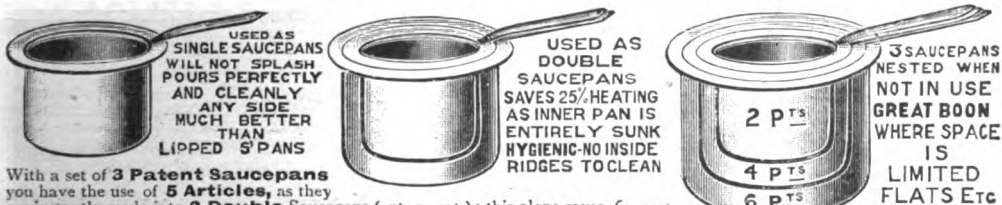

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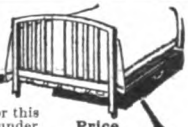

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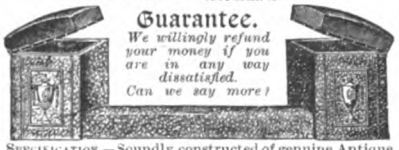

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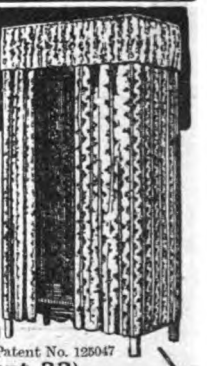

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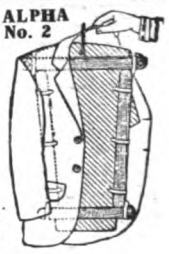

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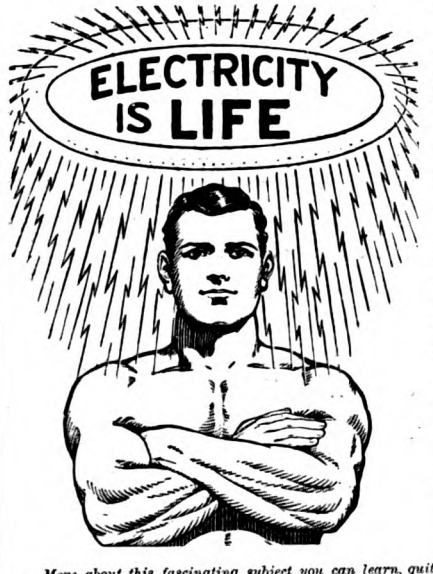

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Contents for March, 1921.

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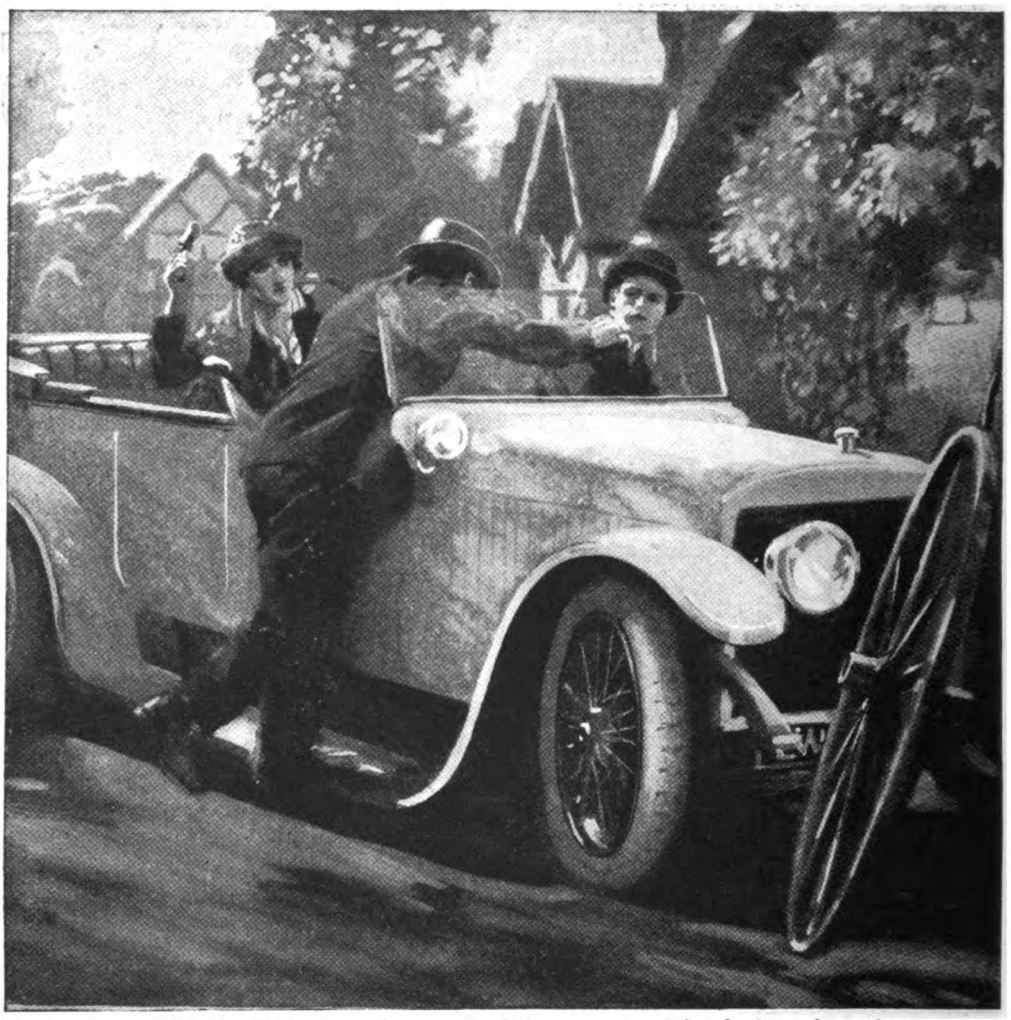
March, 1921



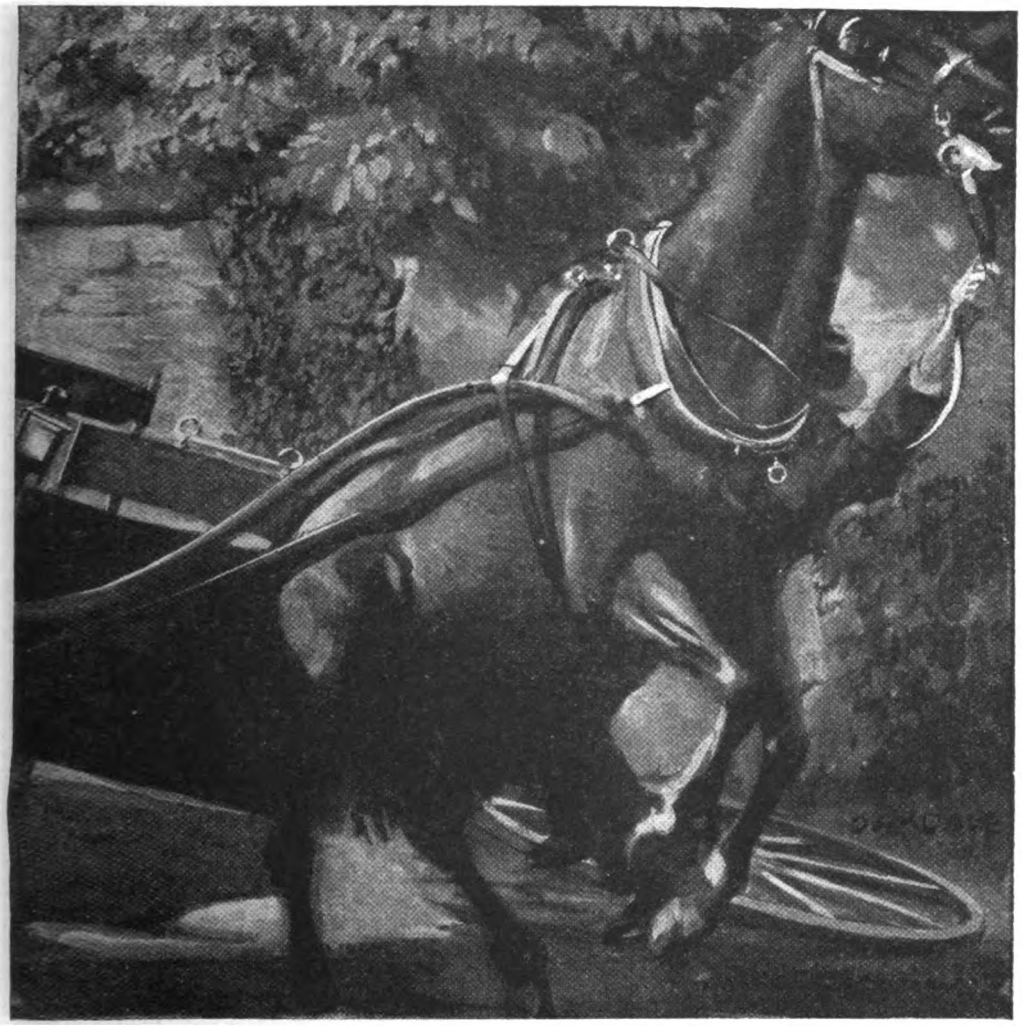
"The horse reared, wrenched the trap out of the ditch, and at that moment

Headlong

I.

THIS is how Gemma came to know Raphael Phare.

The whim that had led her to motor to this infinitely remote hamlet of the moors had expired after five minutes' examination of its lonely bleakness. The big and slightly furtive fellow who kept the only shop had then given her a long list of the things he could not supply for her refreshment, and she had been forced to fall back on a glass of vitiated ginger-ale and a bag of biscuits. She left the shop quickly because, as she told herself, the big man made her shiver. Ten minutes after she had arrived she was in her high-power car again,



Gemma struck the man who had stepped on to the footboard."

by W. DOUGLAS NEWTON

ILLUSTRATED BY
E.G.OAKDALE

her hand already on the starting gear, and a great satisfaction that she could get away from this gloomy place so easily and quickly in her heart.

It was then she found a man standing beside her on the footboard.

He was a genial young man, with an easy, mundane, almost indolent air; the sort of neat and perfect young man who seems to be bred exclusively for social decoration and the accomplishment of much jazz. Gemma's first decisions about him were: (1) that his smart clothes clashed with the scenery; (2) that he had managed to materialize from nowhere in particular with an astonishing adroitness and silence.

He seemed to understand her thoughts as he stood on the footboard smiling in

an amiable and polite way. And he said :—

" Sorry to butt in on you, an' all that, but really, could you give me a lift ? I'd be enormously obliged, you know."

Gemma was perfectly willing to give him a lift, but his arrival was so unexpected she could only say :—

" Oh—oh, how much—that is, how far ? "

" About thirty or forty miles—p'haps fifty."

Gemma stared at him.

" Why, that would be farther than Martindayle ! " she cried.

" No, not farther," he smiled back. " Martindayle's the place. But—— "

HE seemed to be regarding Gemma with a rather intelligent attention. She felt abruptly that the decorative air was not all of him. There was something else underneath, something that was alert and firm and rather forceful. She saw, too, that his handsomeness had a lean and capable air, and that under cover of his social smile the eyes were curiously level and shrewd. She said, quickly, her vivid and gallant little face blushing under his scrutiny :—

" That's all right. I'll take you to Martindayle."

" Awful sorry to have to ask you," he said ; and again he said, " but—— "

" No need for sorrow," she told him. " I'm *going* to Martindayle."

" It's that ' but,' " he said, his smile full of social friendliness. " It's—er—it's rather risky."

" I know the road," said Gemma.

" I mean it's dangerous." Gemma stared at him, wondering whether this was some curious form of humour. He smiled at her with the utmost good feeling. " I mean—well, you know, half an hour ago a man was shooting at me with a revolver, and before that a large fellow did his best to get me with his knife."

Gemma stared, too astonished to be anything but bewildered. He went on, " Of course, it's more than likely to happen again between here and Martindayle—yes, any number of times."

" Shooting at you ? " gasped Gemma.

" And other things. It's awful mean to drag you in, but—but what am I to do ? " Again Gemma could only stare at the pleasant and apparently unperturbed face.

" Of course I can say ' In the name of the law,' and so on ; but to a girl like you—— "

" The law ! " cried Gemma, her hazel eyes widening. " Are you connected with the law ? "

" Well, yes," began the young man. Then he stopped. " Sorry—just a jiffy," he said. He slipped from the car with a curious smooth swiftness, went across the street with an indolence that was markedly rapid, and confronted the large, shifty man of the general shop.

The large, shifty man had been acting in a strange manner. He had stolen cautiously to his doorway. Crouching behind what cover he could find, he was furtively watching the young man. As the young man crossed the road he drew back as though he would fly, then he decided to be bold. The young man stepped up to him—and amazing things happened.

In a flash the large, shifty shopman had snatched some sort of club from under his apron. He swung it viciously to strike the young man down. And the young man hit him. The young man, without losing for a moment his air of sunny casualness, slipped in under that swiping club, and his right hand drove in at the large body. The big man staggered and mowed wildly with his left arm, the other shifted lightly on his feet, his left elbow came back, and he snapped a beautifully-timed punch to the gross jaw. The large shifty man hit his own floor-boards with a final bump, and the young man did not cease behaving in a strange fashion. He stepped over the prostrate shopkeeper and entered the shop. He crossed it calmly, and in the most unruffled manner proceeded to smash the telephone into a most decisive wreck. Then he walked back to the motor-car and the astonished Gemma.

" That's the sort of thing I mean," he said, smiling, as though continuing a conversation but slightly interrupted. " Only it won't be a club ; it'll probably be pistols or guns."

" You mean—men will try to kill you between here and Martindayle ? " she gasped.

" That's it," he smiled. " And you'd be dragged into it."

" But—but——" she cried. " It doesn't sound real ! "

" Oh, it is. Really it's quite logical. If they don't stop my getting to Martindayle, then some of those men will be hanged. It's really only business for them to out me."

" Get in ! " cried Gemma. " Get in quickly ! I'll take you to Martindayle. I drove a car in France, you know," she added. " Being shot at won't be altogether novel." Her hand went out, and under its touch the great car began to vibrate with awakened life.

At that moment a motor-cycle came snorting into the village behind them. It rushed half-way down the street. It stopped with a jerk. Its rider sprang from it, stared for an instant at the young man on the footboard, and then his hand snatched at his pocket. The young man on the footboard sprang into the car. He cried, " Get going, quick ! " The great car moved. Behind

them the motor-cyclist had whipped his hand from his pocket, and in it was a pistol. He was firing at them. Gemma saw three flecks of dust leap up from the roadway in front, heard something hit the back of the motor with a loud whack. She spun the car round on to a side road, where the houses would cut off the line of fire.

II.

THE great car lunged with its pulsing speed up the side road. Gemma had opened out, and they were covering the ground in giant leaps.

Gemma, her firm little wrists resolutely controlling the kicking wheel, her eyes bright and keen with excitement, was conscious that the genial young man by her side was kneeling on the seat, but it was only when she heard the "snap-snap-snap" of an automatic pistol that she realized he was quite sedately firing at the cyclist.

They kicked and roared downward through a cutting. The young man sat down; he leant across so that his shoulder touched hers; she could feel the warmth of his face on her neck as he said into her ear:—

"Missed the beggar. Pace and bumps against fine shooting. 'Fraid he's off to rouse the clans."

Gemma shouted back:—

"No matter. We're off the main road. We can make Martindayle by side roads—get round behind them. This road leads to a little place called Gricton. There are several tracks there by which we can dodge them."

"Oh," shouted the young man, "he'll telephone to Gricton." He had a map on his knee by now. His finger traced the route of the motor-cyclist to a house. "He's making for that; he'll send out a general S.O.S. from there."

Gemma slowed in order to get some inkling of the rather amazing facts this cool young man was suggesting.

"But Gricton—one of the last villages on earth?" she cried.

"Oh, they're in Gricton," he answered.

"Are they everywhere, then?" she cried, startled.

"They are. They're all round this district." In her amazement Gemma slowed the great car to a walk.

"What are we up against—an army?" she demanded.

His eyes were examining her with intelligent appraisement, his lips smiling pleasantly all the while.

"Something like that," he said. "The biggest criminal organization in modern times, anyhow. He pointed to his map; near the hamlet, Merrivale, they had just left, there were some markings in pen and ink. "That's the headquarters of the gang. It's an old munition factory, in which some sort of modern industry is supposed to be carried on. It's merely a sort of base and clearing-house of the gang. In all the villages within easy radius of it are members of the gang, most of them covering up their real activities in the manner of that fatted shopkeeper I have just been brusque with. That is why I wrecked his telephone, not because I wanted to stop a general alarm—that's already gone out—but to cover up my line of flight. That wretched motor-cyclist has upset things properly. The whole district will be jumping with rogues. We've got to run through a regular barrage of 'em. All we can do now is dodge."

Gemma, who had been looking at the map in off moments from steering, said:—

"And we will dodge! Look, by taking to the moor, we can cut across to the little lane there which meanders eastward. It crosses the main road to Martindayle at a lonely place—I remember it—and there it is wandering south and east. We can get under Martindayle from the east by taking one of that network of side roads. That will fool them. They'll get information that we are running west through Gricton. They'll never dream we've taken to the moors and doubled on our tracks."

"Can you get across the moors?"

"It's bumpy, but it's feasible; anyhow, it is a chance to fool your gang, and, yes, it's not a bad alternative to being shot at."

The young man, after examining the map, let out a vivid laugh.

"I really was lucky to meet you. You seem to be quite the right sort of person to encounter in a crisis. You're——"

"Hold tight," cried Gemma. "This is where the bumps begin. I'm going to turn on to the moor."

With a long, slithering double leap the great car was on the grassy flats of the open moor. They had to go forward at reduced speed, and even at that they were tossed about on the padded seat as though they were in a row-boat on a lopping sea. It was a risky and tossing run, in which breath was held too often to enable conversations to be kept up.

But though they did not speak, each was acutely conscious of the other. Gemma was realizing the clean, lean, good looks and the astonishing capacity of the apparently indolent young man at her side. The young man at her side had very little to do but to enjoy the exquisite outline of her delicate and yet gallant little profile, her warm and generous lips, exquisitely lined, the soft eyes with their entrancing lashes, and the irreverently-tipped but wholly adorable little nose. A very absorbing, delicious, and vital face—his time was well spent.

"The young man on the footboard cried: 'Get going, quick!' Behind them the motor-

Presently they came to the fillet of the by-lane, and had to dodge about to find a cart-ramp across the evil little ditch. They came on one suddenly, and with a brilliant dexterity that made him cry out in admiration Gemma brought the great car in a sweeping double turn on to the roadway. In a rush of miles they sprang along this, the great engine purring and lilting in a song of speed. Through little coppices and over and down easy hills, by bleak houses and amid empty plains of grass they rocked and swung, curved and flowed onward at a glory of pace. Standing things blurred under the eyes as they rushed upon and by them. They could hear the wind throating over the shield with a roar almost as deep as the song of the cylinders. Then :—

"Beyond that copse, down-hill, is the place where we cross the Martindayle road. Shall we stop?" shouted Gemma.

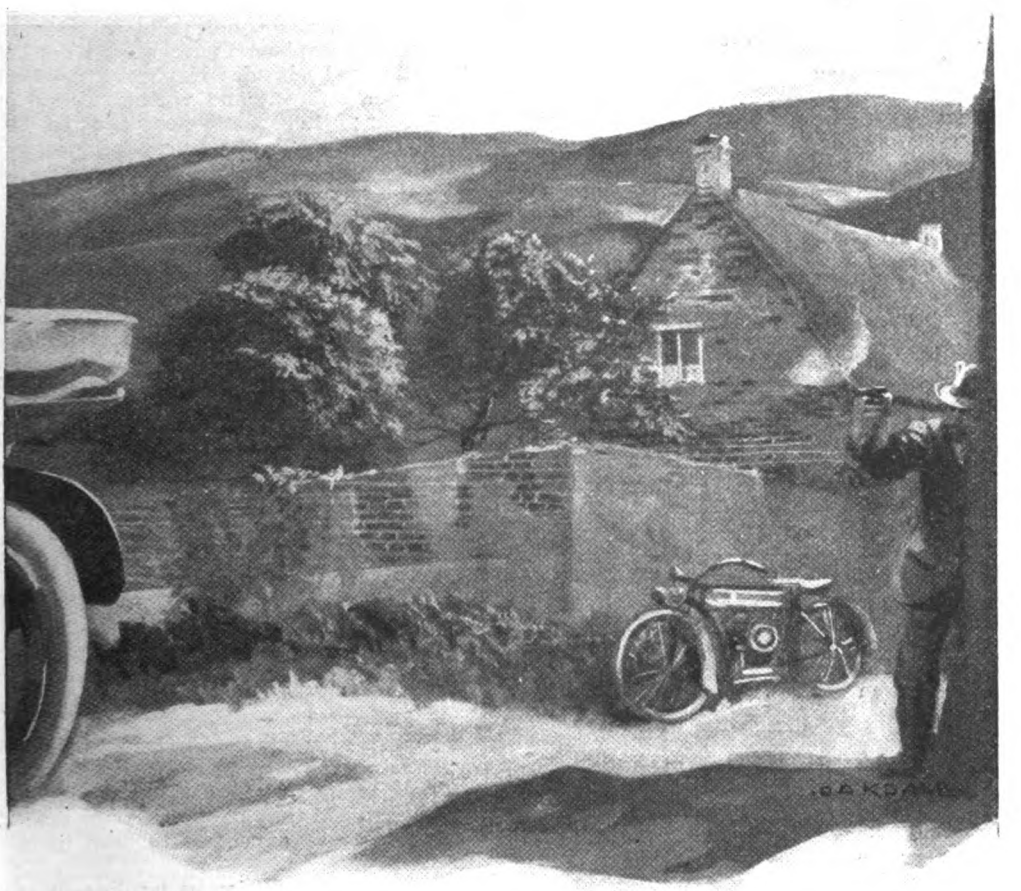
"We'll stop," said the young man.

"Field-glasses in the pocket beside you," said Gemma.

"I *was* lucky to meet you!" laughed the young man again. They reached the trees, the girl slipped the car well into the shade, and then they were both out among the trees looking down at the broad band of road that ran along the floor of the valley just beneath them.

"Our lane crosses there, you see," pointed Gemma, "and climbs and turns——"

"Our friends, I think," said the young man, pointing to the north. Gemma saw a big car travelling at no very great pace along the Martindayle road. It was coming towards them, making apparently for Martindayle. The young man was already examining it carefully through the field-glasses. He said, "It was quite the wisest thing, that stop. Look!"



cyclist was firing. Gemma heard something hit the back of the motor with a loud whack."

The great car came with an almost painful slowness along the main road. The five men in it were sparing no pains, and their careful search had a terrible suggestion of efficiency in it. Although Gemma and the young man were well hidden by the trees and bushes, the girl had a nervous feeling that she must appear as large and as palpable as a giant advertisement. She stirred as though to get back deeper into cover.

"Don't move," said the young man. "They can't see us as we are, but any movement shows up astonishingly. Can't help admiring their thoroughness, can one? They leave absolutely nothing to chance—that's the military training in 'em."

"Military training? Are they——"

"Oh, a collection of redoubtable bad hats an' so on, many of 'em having seen service. The whole thing is organized on military lines, a most wonderful business, as rotten as things can be, but running on clockwork. That's why it's so formidable. That's why it must be smashed. But they aren't Johnnies to be careless with."

The car crawled with its painful care along the main road. As Gemma watched it she felt growing within her a terror that seemed to keep pace in expansion with the slow movement of the car. It was a terror she would not have felt if she had dashed hot-blooded into an excitement of danger, but this cold-hearted, calculated procedure made her crawl with fear. Her breath caught, she looked away, anywhere rather than watch that creeping motor-car. She found she was looking into the eyes of the young man.

There was an immense reassurance in the candid, friendly imperturbability of his blue eyes. He looked into hers and smiled. He put out his hand and rested it on hers.

"Jumpy work, eh?" he said. "But, I

say, you have got tremendous grit." A touch of immense stimulation, words immensely encouraging. Gemma smiled and felt much better at once. Then the young man said, "I say, will you take charge of these two books?" He dipped into a big pocket inside his coat, brought out two small but fat ledgers, which had, apparently, been at one time locked, but now had their locks burst off. Gemma looked at him. "This is the evidence—names, details of plunder, amounts, notes of the different *coups*—in fact, all the facts to smash that gang are in those two books. Get them into the hands of the police somehow. Say Raphael Phare gave them to you. But whatever you do, don't let those blackguards get 'em back. Make a getaway while I hold 'em off. Dash straight down this road and past their car, which will be standing still—that would be the best, while I'm making 'em chase me across the moors, I mean."

Gemma stared down at the fateful books in her hand, up to his face again.

"But why—why——"

The young man smiled, slipped his pistol out of his pocket, and put in a full clip of cartridges. Gemma followed his gaze downhill.

The big car had stopped. It had stopped at the crossing where their own road cut across. Even as she looked two men jumped out.

III.

GEMMA felt her heart beating suffocatingly in her throat. The sight of those men getting out of the car, looking uphill in their direction, seemed to make every nerve in her body scream. The young man was saying:—

"Creep back now. You'll know when to start when you hear the shooting. I'll strike across the moor to the left there, where the ground dips, and they'll be cut off by the hill from sight of the lane. When you hear me fire the whole of my clip without pausing, let her rip." He glanced down at the high road again. "But, I say, one moment."

The men who had jumped from the car were behaving strangely. They had looked up the hill, but they made no attempt to come up the lane. Instead, they bent down examining the ground with a most intent care.

"Looking for tyre tracks," said Raphael Phare. "They are just making certain that a car has not crossed or turned into the road from this lane. They don't really know what has happened to us yet. They are only taking just ordinary, businesslike precautions. Admirable scoundrels, eh? I thought so—they are off to the next lane. Good job we hadn't crossed."

Even as he was speaking the two men had returned to the big car, it had started, and once more it crept down the main road, the two men with the field-glasses examining every inch of the countryside as it went. Gemma and Raphael Phare waited until it was well round a bend. Raphael Phare held aloft a damp finger, and with a "Wind in our favour; they won't hear us; let her go!" they started on their headlong rush down-hill. In ten minutes they were across the main road, tearing at a quite reckless speed over the dangerously uneven track that would bring them round under Martindayle from the east instead of the west.

Raphael Phare, with the map on his knees, was studying their route. Presently, when the road got a trifle better, and human intercourse was more possible, he drew attention to a small collection of spots clustered about their path.

"We overlooked that little one, I fear," he said.

"Greenwark," she answered, after a darting glance. "Just a collection of houses, that's all."

"A little more than that," he said, evenly. "The innkeeper and his male staff——"

"Even there!" she cried. And then, "I can take to the moors again."

"No good," he answered. "We're in the elbow of that idiot stream, the Reedburn; there are no bridges, and we can't ford it. We'll have to risk it."

"There's a nasty double turn in Greenwark, and that will make us go slow."

"Well, I hope they haven't been 'phoned."

"Why should they be 'phoned—or rather, why should they expect us to head in this direction?"

"They'll be ready for us heading in any direction. By this time, too, they'll have known we haven't arrived in Gricton. That'll tell them we've doubled back somewhere. So a general warning will be flashed to all the villages to be ready for us."

"A general warning—all the villages!" cried Gemma. "It sounds incredible."

"Sounds like a 'movie' scheme of things, doesn't it? Only I'm afraid it's true. You see, it *is* a beast of a big gang, something quite amazingly widespread in its organization. It—but I had better give you the whole facts."

"Ought you?" she cried; for, after all, she knew his work was official, and therefore probably secret.

"It's the least I can do," he cried, and she knew he was smiling, felt the friendliness of him against her shoulder. "And then—if you know, it may be helpful."

"Oh, I want to know—if I may."

"Well, perhaps you've noticed there has been a rash of big robberies in the last six months. The Kendal Bank robbery of

twenty thousand pounds was one of them. That time when the biggest jewellers in Nottingham were cleared from strong-room to attic was another. Then there were the big goods robberies from the railway-sheds at Hullampton, and the warehouse burglaries in a score of manufacturing towns. There's the widespread forgery of notes, too—all that sort of thing. There were worse things—the Gold Shipment robbery had a murder in it, and so did the raid on the Preston pay-roll; there have, in fact, been a number of very ugly happenings. And—I won't bore you with all the details—I, that is we, gradually became certain that the whole of these crimes could be grouped together. They had a certain method that indicated—well, one gang as the author of the lot. That is the theory I have been working on for some time."

"You working on it?" said Gemma, for he seemed to her so utterly unlike any detective she had ever heard or read of.

"Yes; crime's my regular work. I'm a detective. Found I had a gift for that sort of thing when I was on the Intelligence in France. But this business: I followed out my theory, and presently I found I was right. There was a big gang, a tremendously big gang, at work. I found heaps of clues that led me up to Merrivale, to get the facts."

"By yourself?"

"Couldn't show a crowd, you know. With scoundrels in every one of these villages we had to tread after the manner of the delicate Agag. And my going there wasn't so difficult. I turned up as a factory inspector, took a room, and in the most casual way began to inspect. You see, that big factory is a very good camouflage. There's quite a lot of legitimate work going on there. Electrical fittings and fixtures and any amount of small things in brass and metals are made there. Real work to cover up the coming and going of lorries with plunder, and the use of the sheds as storage, as well as an excuse for keeping any number of men about. In a general sense, that big factory is what I said it was, a G.H.Q. The chief brains, a real sort of headquarter staff, live there and plan robberies for all over the country. They plan long and well. The men in the factory go to wherever the burglary is to be. The thing is pulled off. They get the stuff secretly by lorries to this place, and from there it is cleared gradually and carefully throughout not merely this country but the world. It really is a gigantic and beautifully systematized organization—burglary carried on in the joint-stock manner. The men grouped in the villages about are there for definite ends. They are workers with the gang, they act as spies and guards, they help to put plunder into circulation through their shops—notes, for example, or jewellery that has been broken up and then redesigned, and so on. Oh, it's an elaborate and beautiful and dangerous concern, I can assure you."

"And you went into that lions' den alone—and beat them!"

"Well, yes, I did. I spent best part of a week poking round. That wasn't really hard. You see, my casual and decorative air convinced 'em I couldn't possibly be dangerous—they thought I was some ass of a relative of a Minister who had been pushed into a cushy inspector's job. There you are, then. I wandered about an' found out what I wanted—the place where these books were kept. It was a sort of secret office, and so I went along and gelignited the safe and got the books. I had to run for it, but I had fixed up a hiding-place, and I was able to spend an hour or so going into those books. They made me understand how anxious the gang would be to get me. They form a complete case."

Gemma interrupted him.

"Do you think these people in front belong to the gang?"

IV.

THEIR rush had now carried them to the outskirts of the village of Greenwark. The street narrowed to the dangerous turn, and in the narrowest part of the street three men and a trap were doing strange things. The horse in the trap was backing and sidling all over the place. The men appeared in difficulties, but one glance at them showed that they were not really in difficulties, showed why Gemma had felt they might be enemies. It was not the horse that was restive, the driver was the man responsible for his antics, though he was covering up his manner of handling the reins cunningly. Just when the motor slowed and came upon them the crisis was reached. The trap swung broadside to the road, its wheels went bump into the ditch, the whole concern stopped, completely blocking the fairway.

The men sprang from the trap, apparently saw the motor for the first time, and came towards it with anxiously waving hands.

"Can you stop your car, sir?" cried one man. "That old horse is frightened o' motors." Another man came forward and stood by the car on Gemma's side.

"Go back, my friends, and swing your horse round," said Raphael. "We'll get by." The man who had spoken hesitated. His hand went down to his pocket. Raphael passed what she afterwards found to be a life preserver into Gemma's hand. He did it secretly. He said to the man, "I say, is this right for Martindayle? I'm rather in a hurry."

The man stepped close up to the car, his hand definitely to his pocket. The man next Gemma moved up to the splash-board. Gemma being a mere girl, he kept his eyes mainly on Raphael.

"Oh, you're goin' to Martindayle, are you?" growled the first fellow. And he stopped growling. He was looking down the barrel of Raphael's automatic. He made a spasmodic movement, turned, ran, plucked out his pistol, fired it wildly. Raphael fired, and he went down. The horse reared at the shot, wrenched the trap out of the ditch, turned, and tore down the village street, knocking over the man who stood by its head. At that moment Gemma struck the man at her side. The man at her side had been foolish. He had stepped on to the foot-board and made a lunge at Raphael, a lunge that was too late as well as too short. He had ignored Gemma. Gemma felt her heart sick, but she slipped her arm free in a flash, lifted it, and brought the preserver down. It was not a decisive blow, but the preserver was weighted with lead. The man went limp over the steering wheel. Gemma was staring, half sobbing, when Raphael tossed the unconscious figure out of the car and with a firm grasp brought Gemma's hands to the wheel. She understood at once. They went through the difficult village of Greenwark perilously but safely.

NOW, obviously, it was a race against enemies, a race in which their opponents must be tricked and baffled if they were to get through at all. The man who had been knocked down had risen and run off almost at once. He would give the general alarm. They dodged and doubled along the roads. At a junction, instead of striking east and south towards Martindayle, they whipped north and west again. They curved round at racing speed until they had circled their own track. They crossed the Martindayle road above their old crossing, and, taking wildly to the bumpy moor, pushed to the side lanes of the west.

They saw men moving after them. The country was quick with them. They would appear in the distance, and they would shout and shoot. Once a motor-cyclist swept round a bend upon them. He yelled at the sight of them, tried to check his machine. They could see his frantic anxiety. Gemma's hand had flashed to the brake, for the lane was narrow. Raphael snatched it away. With an exquisite touch he deflected the great car on to the cyclist. Their mud-guards touched him, and man and machine were flung terribly into the hedge.

Again, on a broad stretch of road a great car came roaring after them. They knew of it by the sudden whipping of a bullet over their heads. A second came, clipping the brass of the wind-screen, starring the glass. Raphael was up at once, and firing back. He didn't kill anything, as he said, but he made them shaky. Bullets whistled by, well out of range. As he fired he yelled, "A Rolls-Royce—can you beat it?"

"No!" she shouted back. They swept on, thundering at an almost maniac rush of speed; the great car behind creeping up, creeping up. It overtook them relentlessly. Raphael crouched, steadying his pistol. Abruptly he loosed the whole of a clip. He paused, looking back. Gemma was aware of a definite cessation of noise. Raphael slipped down beside her.

"In the radiator, every one. That settles *them*."

They passed through a hamlet, where a man flung a small barrel across their path, and missed by a fraction. "That's Kamsing," cried Gemma. Raphael examined the map. "Nearly home!" he cried. "Another fifteen miles only to Martindayle."

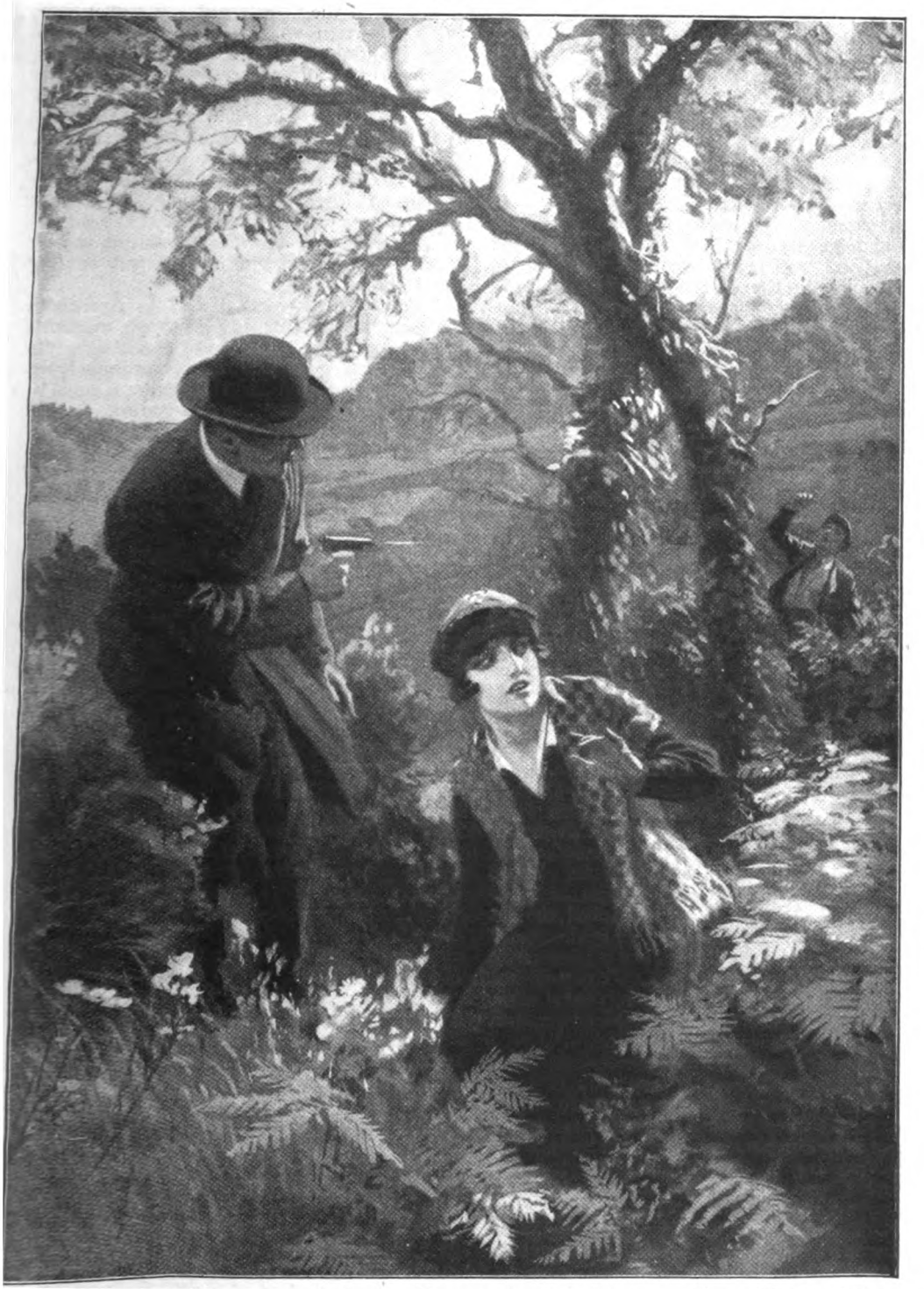
They swept on. They kept to the main road now, risking all. Down out of the village and away they rushed, through a bunch of trees that went by in a haze and a roar, twisted, straightened, leaped with a stride on to open and wild country—and Gemma shouted.

She shouted and grabbed at the brakes, and was too late. On the road, across the road, lay a number of planks, and in the planks were nails. The tyres took them, whipped them up. There were ghastly noises of brake and shattering metal and expiring tyres. The great car lurched and heaved, staggered across the road, slid with a sickening crash into the high bank.

At that moment men on the farther side of the road began shooting.

Raphael dragged Gemma out of the car, urged her up the bank. He turned and fired twice. A man toppled out of the gorse across the road, fell floundering down the bank to the road. Raphael fired again, turned, and his powerful arm practically lifted the slight girl up the bank and into the scrub beyond. They dived into the bushes, keeping low.

A man ran out of the gorse across the road. Raphael fired, and the man scuttled back. They wormed and dodged through the scrub. Out of the bush before them a man started up, shouted, and fired. Raphael dived for him, crashed into his middle fists and head and shoulders, striking sickeningly, and the fool went down. He twisted as he fell. Raphael Phare struck him once with the butt of his pistol, and he lay still. They were going on, but Gemma stopped and picked up the man's revolver, and, seeing that, Raphael made a lightning and successful search for



"Raphael urged Gemma up the bank. He turned and fired twice. A man fell floundering down the bank to the road."

cartridges in the man's coat. Thus, when they heard men tearing through the bushes behind them, both fired, Gemma imitating the slight sweeping movement of Raphael's hands. They heard a scream and the crash of a heavy body into the scrub, and then a man running back.

On the road they heard the roar and rush of a hurtling car. There was shouting, and the car stopped; they heard the bustle of men piling out. A voice shouted, "They're lower down the road; lower down. This way; come on!" They heard the stamping of feet going in the direction of Martindayle. They immediately turned and worked back along their tracks.

Gemma followed the lithe young man as he moved swiftly, showing not a sign of himself. She noted that he was moving in the direction of the road. Behind them they could hear the movements of men beating a way through the bushes. It was getting distant. There were no shouts. They pressed towards the road. Gemma wondered what this nimble-witted young man was up to. She soon saw.

They came to the road. On the road was the figure of the man who had been shot. There was their wrecked car. Almost alongside their car was a big motor; its engine was running, and it was empty. Its chauffeur was up on the bank, pistol in hand, staring under his palm over the bushes, following the movements of his brother rogues. He was in an excellent position to reach his car at a bound. He was in an excellent position for Raphael to reach him. The young man touched Gemma's hand, and she remained quiet in the bushes, and in a moment he was gone. There was not a sound, not a sign. Suddenly his lean figure shot out of the scrub and on to the chauffeur. There was a swinging and terrible blow, and the fellow went down. Gemma reached the car only a second after Raphael. They clambered into it. They started it. They slipped down the road, well under the bank. They gathered speed. Suddenly a man sprang into view, shouted, and fired. They opened out, rushed towards Martindayle at top speed.

Three miles on, they met a motor-wagonette. It was full of policemen. They had had word, of course, of Raphael Phare's dangerous mission to the munition factory, and, having had the report that there were strange happenings and shooting in that district, they had put two and two together and sent a good force out along the Martindayle road.

Raphael Phare immediately joined them. Gemma was sent back with a policeman in the car they had commandeered, with instructions to send more policemen, and to carry the secret books to quarters where immediate action could be taken on the information they contained. It was a parting as hurried as had been the meeting. And yet there was something more in it—a lifetime of emotions seemed to have been packed into their short companionship. She saw him go, and she knew an acute anxiety that he should be going back to that factory, to that gang of criminals, to danger—perhaps to death. She felt that for one so young, so clever, so good-looking to go back to death was terrible. And—and she wanted to know so much about him. So, as the car started, she ran beside it and put out her hand and cried:—

"Come back—come back!" And both of them looked, for one of those moments that seem to be made up of eternities, into each other's eyes, and their hands gripped hard and lingered in the grip. And he smiled back at her, his old genial, assured smile.

HE came to her house in two days. She rose from her chair in the big drawing-room and went towards him, smiling and blushing.

"You came through—splendid! And you beat them?"

"We've smashed 'em. We've got three of the leaders of the headquarter staff, so to speak; three are dead, and the other two we'll catch all right, I fancy. Those books help us. As for the rest of the gang——"

"Three killed!" she cried, her breath catching. "There was a fight?"

"An episode," he smiled. "It began by wanting to be a fight. They thought a mere wagonette-load of police was a small proposition. But when policemen in cars began to arrive from all points of the compass it became a mere scramble. They scrambled. We've got most of them and all the loot and all the plans. And what we haven't got we'll clear up easily enough. That gang's done for."

"And all through you!" she cried, her face bright.

"I think you had quite a lot to do with it, too," he smiled back.

"Me!" she breathed—"me! And that reminds me—you've found me. And I didn't even tell you my name."

"I know it now," he said. "It's the jolliest kind of name."

"Is it?"

"Gemma," he said. "Plucky, delicious little Gemma." He walked to her and stood close.

"How—how did you find out how to—to find me?" she said, softly.

"Detecting," he said, "is my job. Any detective can find anything if——"

"If?"

"If he wants it as hard as I want Gemma."

The Evidence for Fairies

by

A. CONAN DOYLE

WITH MORE FAIRY PHOTOGRAPHS

This article was written by Sir A. Conan Doyle before actual photographs of fairies were known to exist. His departure for Australia prevented him from revising the article in the new light which has so strikingly strengthened his case. We are glad to be able to set before our readers two new fairy photographs, taken by the same girls, but of more recent date than those which created so much discussion when they were published in our Christmas number, and of even greater interest and importance. They speak for themselves.

WE are accustomed to the idea of amphibious creatures who may dwell unseen and unknown in the depths of the waters, and then some day be spied sunning themselves upon a sandbank, whence they slip into the unseen once more. If such appearances were rare, and if it should so happen that some saw them more clearly than others, then a very pretty controversy would arise, for the sceptics would say, with every show of reason, "Our experience is that only land creatures live on the land, and we utterly refuse to believe in things which slip in and out of the water; if you will demonstrate them to us we will begin to consider the question." Faced by so reasonable an opposition, the others could only mutter that they had seen them with their own eyes, but that they could not command their movements. The sceptics would hold the field.

Something of the sort may exist in our psychic arrangements. One can well imagine that there is a dividing line, like the water edge, this line depending upon what we vaguely call a higher rate of vibrations. Taking the vibration theory as a working hypothesis, one could conceive that by raising or lowering them, creatures could move from one side to the other of this line of material visibility, as the tortoise moves from the water to the land, returning for refuge to invisibility as the reptile scuttles back to the surf. This, of course, is supposition, but intelligent supposition based on the available evidence is the pioneer of science, and it may be that the actual solution will be found in this direction. I am alluding now, not to spirit return, where seventy years of close observation has given us some sort of certain and definite laws, but rather to those fairy and phantom phenomena which have been endorsed by so many ages, and still even in these material days seem to break into some lives in the most unexpected fashion.

Victorian science would have left the world hard and clean and bare, like a landscape in the moon; but this science is in truth but a little light in the darkness, and outside that limited circle of definite knowledge we see the loom and shadow of gigantic and fantastic possibilities around us, throwing themselves continually across our consciousness in such ways that it is difficult to ignore them.

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MY OWN CHILDREN HAVE SEEN THEM.

There is much curious evidence of varying value concerning these borderland forms, which come or go either in fact or imagination—the latter most frequently, no doubt. And yet there remains a residue which, by all human standards, should point to occasional fact. Lest I should be too diffuse, I limit myself in this essay to the fairies, and passing all the age-long tradition, which is so universal and consistent, come down to some modern instances which make one feel that this world is very much more complex than we had imagined, and that there may be upon its surface some very strange neighbours who will open up inconceivable lines of science for our posterity, especially if it should be made easier for them, by sympathy or other help, to emerge from the deep and manifest upon the margin.

Taking a large number of cases which lie before me, there are two points which are common to nearly all of them. One is that children claim to see these creatures far more frequently than adults. This may possibly come from greater sensitiveness of apprehension, or it may depend upon these little entities having less fear of molestation from the children. The other is, that more cases are recorded in which they have been seen in the still, shimmering hours of a very hot day than at any other time. " The action of the sun upon the brain," says the sceptic. Possibly—and also possibly not. If it were a question of raising the slower vibration of our surroundings one could imagine that still, silent heat would be the very condition which might favour such a change. What is the mirage of the desert ? What is that scene of hills and lakes which a whole caravan can see while it faces in a direction where for a thousand miles of desert there is neither hill nor lake, nor any cloud or moisture to produce refraction ? I can ask the question, but I do not venture to give an answer. It is clearly a phenomenon which is not to be confused with the erect or often inverted image which is seen in a land of clouds and of moisture.

If the confidence of children can be gained and they are led to speak freely, it is surprising how many claim to have seen fairies. My younger family consists of two little boys and one small girl, very truthful children, each of whom tells with detail the exact circumstances and appearance of the creature. To each it happened only once, and in each case it was a single little figure, twice in the garden, once in the nursery. Inquiry among friends shows that many children have had the same experience, but they close up at once when met by ridicule and incredulity. Sometimes the shapes are unlike those which they would have gathered from picture-books. " Fairies are like nuts and moss," says one child in Lady Glenconner's charming study of family life. My own children differ in the height of the creatures, which may well vary, but in their dress they are certainly not unlike the conventional idea, which, after all, may also be the true one.

"I SAW LEGIONS OF DWARFS."

There are many people who have a recollection of these experiences of their youth, and try afterwards to explain them away on material grounds which do not seem adequate or reasonable. Thus in his excellent book on folk-lore, the Rev. S. Baring-Gould gives us a personal experience which illustrates several of the points already mentioned. " In the year 1838," he says, " when I was a small boy of four years old, we were driving to Montpelier on a hot summer day over the long straight road that traverses a pebble and rubble strewn plain on which grows nothing save a few aromatic herbs. I was sitting on the box with my father when, to my great surprise, I saw legions of dwarfs of about two feet high running along beside the horses ; some sat laughing on the pole, some were scrambling up the harness to get on the backs of the horses. I remarked to my father what I saw, when he abruptly stopped the carriage and put me inside beside my mother, where, the conveyance being closed, I was out of the sun. The effect was that, little by little, the host of imps diminished in number till they disappeared altogether."

Here, certainly, the advocates of sunstroke have a strong, though by no means a final, case. Mr. Baring-Gould's next illustration is a sounder one.

" When my wife was a girl of fifteen," he says, " she was walking down a lane in Yorkshire, between green hedges, when she saw seated in one of the privet hedges a little green man, perfectly well made, who looked at her with his beady black eyes. He was about a foot or fifteen inches high. She was so frightened that she ran home. She remembers that it was a summer day."

A girl of fifteen is old enough to be a good witness, and her flight and the clear detail of her memory point to a real experience. Again we have the suggestion of a hot day.

Baring-Gould has yet a third case. " One day a son of mine," he says, " was sent into the garden to pick pea-pods for the cook to shell for dinner. Presently he rushed into the house as white as chalk to say that while he was thus engaged, and standing between the rows of peas, he saw a little man wearing a red cap, a green jacket, and brown knee-breeches, whose face was old and wan, and who had a grey beard and eyes as black and

ALICE AND THE LEAPING FAIRY.

The fairy is leaping up from leaves below and hovering for a moment—it had done so three or four times. Rising a little higher than before, Alice thought it would touch her face and involuntarily tossed her head back. Fairy is in close-fitting costume, with lavender-coloured wings.

Photographed by Iris. August 26, 1920. Copyright by E. L. Gardner.

hard as sloes. He stared so intently at the boy that the latter took to his heels."

Here, again, the pea-pods show that it was summer, and probably in the heat of the day. Once again the detail is very exact and corresponds closely, as I shall presently show, to some independent accounts. Mr. Baring-Gould is inclined to put all these down to the heat conjuring up the familiar pictures of fairy books, but some further evidence may cause the reader to doubt this explanation.

"PROVED TO ME THE EXISTENCE OF FAIRIES."

Let us compare with these stories the very direct evidence of Mrs. Violet Tweedale, whose courage in making public the result of her own remarkable psychic faculties should meet with recognition from every student of the subject. Our descendants will hardly realize the difficulty which now exists of getting first-hand evidence with names attached, for they will have outgrown the state when the cry of "fake" and "fraud" and "dupe" is raised at once against any observer, however honourable and moderate, by people who know little or nothing of the subject. Mrs. Tweedale says:—

"I had a wonderful little experience some five years ago which proved to me the existence of fairies. One summer afternoon I was walking alone along the avenue of Lupton House, Devonshire. It was an absolutely still day—not a leaf moving, and all Nature seemed to sleep in the hot sunshine. A few

yards in front of me my eye was attracted, by the violent movements of a single long blade-like leaf of a wild iris. This leaf was swinging and bending energetically, while the rest of the plant was motionless. Expecting to see a field-mouse astride it, I stepped very softly up to it. What was my delight to see a tiny green man. He was about five inches long, and was swinging back downwards. His tiny green feet, which appeared to be green-booted, were crossed over the leaf, and his hands, raised behind his head, also held the blade. I had a vision of a merry little face and something red in the form of a cap on the head. For a full minute he remained in view, swinging on the leaf. Then he vanished. Since then I have several times seen a single leaf moving violently while the rest of the plant remained motionless, but I have never again been able to see the cause of the movement."

Here the dress of the fairy, green jacket and red cap, is exactly the same as was described independently by Baring-Gould's son, and again we have the elements of heat and stillness. It may be fairly answered that many artists have drawn the fairies in such a dress, and that the colours may in this way have been impressed upon the minds of both observers. In the bending iris we have something objective, however, which cannot easily be explained away as a cerebral hallucination, and the whole incident seems to me an impressive piece of evidence.

A lady with whom I have corresponded, Mrs. H., who is engaged in organizing work of the most responsible kind, has had an experience which resembles that of Mrs. Tweedale. "My only sight of a fairy," she says, "was in a large wood in West Sussex about nine years ago. He was a little creature about half a foot high, dressed in leaves. The remarkable thing about his face was that no soul looked through his eyes. He was playing about in long grass and flowers in an open space." Once again, summer is indicated. The length and colour of the creature correspond with Mrs. Tweedale's account, while the lack of soul in the eyes may be compared with the "hard" eyes described by young Baring-Gould.

One of the most gifted clairvoyants in England was the late Mr. Turvey, of Bournemouth, whose book, "The Beginnings of Seership," should be in the library of every student. Mr. Lonsdale, of Bournemouth, is also a well-known sensitive. The latter has given me the following account of an incident which he observed some years ago in the presence of Mr. Turvey.

"DO YOU SEE THEM?"

"I was sitting," says Mr. Lonsdale, "in his company in his garden at Branksome Park. We sat in a hut which had an open front looking on to the lawn. We had been perfectly quiet for some time, neither talking nor moving, as was often our habit. Suddenly I was conscious of a movement on the edge of the lawn, which on that side went up to a grove of pine trees. Looking closely, I saw several little figures dressed in brown peering through the bushes. They remained quiet for a few minutes and then disappeared. In a few seconds a dozen or more small people about two feet in height, in bright clothes and with radiant faces, ran on to the lawn, dancing hither and thither. I glanced at Turvey to see if he saw anything, and whispered, 'Do you see them?' He nodded. These fairies played about, gradually approaching the hut. One little fellow, bolder than the others, came to a croquet hoop close to the hut and, using the hoop as a horizontal bar, turned round and round it, much to our amusement. Some of the others watched him, while others danced about, not in any set dance, but seemingly moving in sheer joy. This continued for four or five minutes, when suddenly, evidently in response to some signal or warning from those dressed in brown, who had remained at the edge of the lawn, they all ran into the wood. Just then a maid appeared coming from the house with tea. Never was tea so unwelcome, as evidently its appearance was the cause of the disappearance of our little visitors." Mr. Lonsdale adds, "I have seen fairies several times in the New Forest, but never so clearly as this." Here also the scene is laid in the heat of a summer day, and the division of the fairies into two different sorts is remarkably borne out by the general descriptions.

Knowing Mr. Lonsdale as I do to be a responsible, well-balanced, and honourable man, I find such evidence as this very hard to put to one side. Here at least the sunstroke hypothesis is negatived, since both men sat in the shade of the hut and each corroborated the observation of the other. On the other hand, each of the men, like Mrs. Tweedale, was supernormal in psychic development, so that it might well happen that the maid, for example, would not have seen the fairies even if she had arrived earlier upon the scene.

I know a gentleman belonging to one of the learned professions whose career as, let us say, a surgeon would not be helped if this article were to connect him with fairy lore. As a matter of fact, in spite of his solemn avocations and his practical and virile character, he seems to be endowed with that faculty—let us call it the appreciation of higher vibrations—which opens up so wonderful a door to its possessor. He claims, or rather he admits—for he is reticent upon

the subject—that he has carried this power of perception on from childhood, and his surprise is not so much at what he sees as at the failure of others to see the same thing. To show that it is not subjective, he tells the story that on one occasion, while traversing a field, he saw a little creature which beckoned eagerly that he should follow. He did so, and presently saw his guide pointing with an air of importance to the ground. There, between the furrows, lay a flint arrow-head, which he carried home with him as a souvenir of the adventure.

"THEY ARE JUST PETER PANS."

This gentleman is further distinguished by having that power of attracting animals, even wild animals, which some people have, and it may be that this sympathy is the same quality which helps him in getting into touch with fairies. His account of the latter is extraordinarily interesting. "I should describe them as being between two and three feet in height," says he, "and dressed in brown clothes. The nearest approach I can get to them is to say that they are 'spiritual monkeys.' Their general instinct is to avoid mankind, but they are capable individually of becoming extremely fond of humans—or of *a* human. They are just Peter Pans, children who have never grown up. Speaking generally, I should imagine that anyone who has had any truck with the fairies must have obeyed the Scriptural injunction to 'become as a little child'—*i.e.*, he or she must be either a Buddha or simple."

Another friend of mine who claims to have the power of seeing fairies is Mr. Tom Tyrrell, the famous medium, whose clairvoyance and general psychic gifts are of the strongest character. I cannot easily forget how one evening in a Yorkshire hotel a storm of raps, sounding very much as if someone were cracking their fingers and thumb, broke out around his head, and how with his coffee-cup in one hand he flapped vigorously with the other to warn off his inopportune visitors. In answer to my question about fairies he says, "Yes, I do see these little pixies or fairies. I have seen them scores of times. But only in the woods and when I do a little fasting. They are a very real presence to me. What are they? I cannot say. I can never get nearer to the beggars than four or five yards. They seem afraid of me, and they scamper off up the trees like squirrels. I dare say if I were to go in the woods oftener I would perhaps gain their confidence more. They are certainly like human beings, only very small, say about twelve or fifteen inches high. I have noticed they are brown in colour, with fairly large heads and standing-up ears, out of proportion to the size of their bodies, and bandy legs. I am speaking of what I see. I have never come across any other clairvoyant who has seen them, though I have read that many do so. Probably they have something to do with Nature processes. The males have very short hair, and the females have rather long, straight hair."

The idea that these little creatures are occupied in consciously furthering Nature's projects—very much, I suppose, as the bee carries pollen—is repeated by the learned Dr. Vanstone, who combines great knowledge of theory with some considerable experience, though a high development of intellect is, in spite of Swedenborg's example, a bar to psychic perception. This would show, if it is correct, that we may have to return to the classical conceptions of something in the nature of naiads and fauns and spirits of the trees and groves. Dr. Vanstone, whose experiences are on the borderland between what is objective and what is sensed without being actually seen, writes to me: "I have been distinctly aware of minute intelligent beings in connection with the evolution of plant forces, particularly in certain localities, for instance in Eccles-bourne Glen. Pond life yields to me the largest and best sense of fairy life, and not the floral world. I may be only clothing my subjective consciousness with unreal objective imaginations, but they are real to me as sentient, intelligent beings, able to communicate with us in varying distinctness. I am inclined to think that elemental beings are engaged, like factory hands, in facilitating the operation of Nature's laws."

HUNTING FOR FAIRIES IN THE NEW FOREST.

Another gentleman who claims to have this most remarkable gift is Mr. Tom Charman, who builds for himself a shelter in the New Forest and hunts for fairies as an etymologist would for butterflies. In answer to my inquiries, he tells me that the power of vision came to him in childhood, but left him for many years, varying in proportion with his own nearness to Nature. According to this seer, the creatures are of many sizes, varying from a few inches to several feet. They are male, female, and children. He has not heard them utter sounds, but believes that they do so, of finer quality than we can hear. They are visible by night as well as by day, and show small lights about the same size as glow-worms. They dress in all sorts of ways. Such is Mr. Charman's account.

It is, of course, easy for us who respond only to the more material vibrations to declare that all these seers are self-deluded, or are the victims of some mental twist. It is difficult for them to defend themselves

from such a charge. It is, however, to be urged upon the other side that these numerous testimonies come from people who are very solid and practical and successful in the affairs of life. One is a distinguished writer, another an ophthalmic authority, a third a successful professional man, a fourth a lady engaged on public service, and so on. To waive aside the evidence of such people on the ground that it does not correspond with our own experience is an act of mental arrogance which no wise man will commit.

It is interesting to compare these various contemporary and first-hand accounts of the impressions which all these witnesses have received. I have already pointed out that the higher vibrations which we associate with hot sunshine, and which we actually seem to see in the shimmer of noontide, is associated with many of the episodes. Apart from this it must be admitted that the evidence is on the whole irregular. We have creatures described which range from five inches to two and a half feet. An advocate of the fairies might say that, since the tradition has always been that they procreate as human beings do, we are dealing with them in every stage of growth, which accounts for the varying size.

"MANY DIFFERENT RACES OF FAIRYLAND."

It seems to me, however, that a better case could be made out if it were pleaded that there have always been many different races of fairyland, and that samples of these races may greatly differ from each other, and may inhabit varying spots; so that an observer like Mr. Tyrrell, for example, may always have seen woodland elves, which bear no resemblance to gnomes or goblins. The monkey-like, brown-clad creatures of my professional friend, which were over two feet high, compare very closely with the creatures which little Baring-Gould saw climbing on to the horses. In both cases these taller fairies were reported from flat, plain-like locations; while the little old-man type varies completely from the dancing little feminine elf so beloved by Shakespeare. In the experience of Mr. Turvey and Mr. Lonsdale, two different types engaged in different tasks were actually seen at the same moment, the one being bright-coloured dancing elves, while the other were the brown-coloured attendants who guarded over them.

The claim that the fairy rings so often seen in meadow or marshland are caused by the beat of fairy feet is certainly untenable, as they unquestionably come from fungi such as *Agaricus Gambo sus* or *Marasmius Oreades*, which grow from a centre, continually deserting the exhausted ground and spreading to that which is fresh. In this way a complete circle is formed, which may be quite small or may be of twelve foot diameter. These circles appear just as often in woods from the same cause, but are smothered over by the decayed leaves among which the fungi grow. But though the fairies most certainly do not produce the rings, it might be asserted, and could not be denied, that the rings once formed, whatever their cause, would offer a very charming course for a circular ring-a-ring dance. Certainly from all time these circles have been associated with the gambols of the little people.

WHAT OUR ANCESTORS SAW.

After these modern instances one is inclined to read with a little more gravity the accounts which our ancestors gave of these creatures; for, however fanciful in parts, it still may have had some core of truth. I say "our ancestors," but as a matter of fact there are shepherds on the South Downs to this day who will throw a bit of their bread and cheese over their shoulders at dinner-time for the little folks to consume. All over the United Kingdom, and especially in Wales and in Ireland, the belief is largely held among those folks who are nearest to Nature. First of all it was always supposed that they lived within the earth. This was natural enough, since a sudden disappearance of a solid body could only be understood in that way. On the whole, their description was not grotesque, and fits easily into its place amid the examples already given. "They were of small stature," says one Welsh authority, quoted in Mrs. Lewes's "Stranger than Fiction," "towards two feet in height, and their horses of the size of hares. Their clothes were generally white, but on certain occasions they have been seen dressed in green. Their gait was lively, and ardent and loving was their glance. . . . They were peaceful and kindly among themselves, diverting in their tricks, and charming in their walk and dancing." This mention of horses is somewhat out of the picture, but all the rest seems corroborative of what has already been stated.

One of the best of the ancient accounts is that of the Rev. R. Kirk, who occupied a parish at Monteith, on the edge of the Highlands, and wrote a pamphlet called "The Secret Commonwealth," about the year 1680. He had very clear and definite ideas about these little creatures, and he was by no means a visionary, but a man of considerable parts, who was chosen afterwards to translate the Bible into Erse. His information about fairies tallies very well with that of the Welshman quoted above. He slips up in imagining that flint arrow-heads are indeed "fairy-bolts," but otherwise his contentions agree very well with our modern instances. They

IRIS, WITH FAIRY CARRYING A BUNCH OF HAREBELLS.

The fairy is standing almost still, poised on the bush-leaves. The wings were shot with yellow; upper part of dress very pale pink.

Photographed by Alice, August 26, 1920. Copyright by E. L. Gardner.

have tribes and orders, according to this Scotch clergyman. They eat. They converse in a thin, whistling sort of language. They have children, deaths, and burials. They are fond of frolic dancing. They have a regular state and polity, with rulers, laws, quarrels, and even battles. They are irresponsible creatures, not hostile to the human race unless they have reason to be angry, but even inclined to be helpful, since some of them, the Brownies, are, by universal tradition, ready to aid in the household work if the family has known how to engage their affection.

EVIDENCE FROM IRELAND.

An exactly similar account comes from Ireland, though the little folk seem to have imbibed the spirit of the island to the extent of being more mercurial and irascible. There are many cases on record where they are claimed to have shown their power, and to have taken revenge for some slight. In the *Larne Reporter* of March 31st, 1866, as quoted in "True Irish Ghost Stories," there is an account of how a stone which the fairies claimed having been built into a house, the inhabitants were bombarded with stones by invisible assailants by day and night, the missiles hurting no one, but causing great annoyance. These stories of stone-throwing are so common, and present such similar well-attested features in cases coming from every part of the world, that they may be accepted as a recognized preternatural phenomenon, whether it be the fairies or some other form of mischievous psychic force which cause the bombardment. The volume already quoted gives another remarkable case, where a farmer, having built a house upon what was really a fairy right-of-way between two "raths" or fairy mounds, was

exposed to such persecution by noises and other disturbances that his family was at last driven out, and had to take refuge in the smaller house which they had previously occupied. This story is narrated by a correspondent from Wexford, who says that he examined the facts himself, examined the deserted house, cross-examined the owner, and satisfied himself that there were two raths in the vicinity, and that the house was in a dead-line between them.

I have particulars of a case in West Sussex which is analogous, and which I have been able to trace to the very lady to whom it happened. This lady desired to make a rock-garden, and for this purpose got some large boulders from a field hard by, which had always been known as the pixie stones, and built them into her new rockery. One summer evening this lady saw a tiny grey woman sitting on one of the boulders. The little creature slipped away when she knew that she had been observed. Several times she appeared upon the stones. Later the people in the village asked if the stones might be moved back to the field, " as," they said, " they are the pixie stones, and if they are moved from their place, misfortunes will happen in the village." The stones were restored.

" WHAT ARE THESE CREATURES ? "

But supposing that they actually do exist, what *are* these creatures ? That is a subject upon which we can speculate only with more or less plausibility. Mr. David Gow, editor of *Light* and a considerable authority upon psychic matters, had first formed the opinion that they were simply ordinary human spirits, seen, as it were, at the wrong end of a clairvoyant telescope, and therefore very minute. A study of the detailed accounts of their varied experience caused him to alter his view, and to conclude that they are really life forms which have developed along some separate line of evolution, and which for some morphological reason have assumed human shape in the strange way in which Nature reproduces her types like the figures on the mandrake root or the frost ferns upon the window.

In a remarkable book, " A Wanderer in the Spirit Lands," published in 1896, the author, Mr. Farnese, under inspiration gives an account of many mysteries, including that of fairies. What he says fits in very closely with the facts that have been put forward, and goes beyond them. He says, speaking of elementals : " Some are in appearance like the gnomes and elves who are said to inhabit mountain caverns. Such, too, are the fairies whom men have seen in lonely and secluded places. Some of these beings are of a very low order of life, almost like the higher order of plants, save that they possess independent motion. Others are very lively and full of grotesque, unmeaning tricks. . . . As nations advance and grow more spiritual these lower forms of life die out from the astral plane of that earth's sphere, and succeeding generations begin at first to doubt and then to deny that they ever had any existence." This is one plausible way of explaining the disappearance of the faun, the dryad, the naiad, and all the creatures which are alluded to with such familiarity in the classics of Greece and Rome.

One may well ask what connection has this fairy-lore with the essays upon the fate of the human soul which have formed this series. The connection is slight and indirect, consisting only in the fact that anything which widens our conceptions of the possible, and shakes us out of our time-rutted lines of thought, helps us to regain our elasticity of mind, and thus to be more open to new philosophies. The fairy question is infinitely small and unimportant compared to the question of our own fate and that of the whole human race. The evidence also is very much less impressive, though, as I trust I have shown, it is not entirely negligible. These creatures are in any case remote from us, and their existence is of little more real importance than that of strange animals or plants. At the same time, the perennial mystery why so many " flowers are born to blush unseen," and why Nature should be so lavish with gifts which human beings cannot use, would be solved if we understood that there were other orders of being which used the same earth and shared its blessings. It is at the lowest an interesting speculation which gives an added charm to the silence of the woods and the wilderness of the moorland.

IMPORTANT NOTICE !

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The Romantic Life-Story of the Great Prima-Donna, who has already earned over One Million Pounds by her wonderful voice.

COMMENCING IN NEXT MONTH'S NUMBER.

Brown of Boomoonoomana

by MORLEY ROBERTS

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GILLETT-RY

ON returning to his one room in Chelsea after seeing two thankless editors and one soulless publisher, Eustace Rankine surveyed an empty grate and cupboard with grave dissatisfaction. If those who should recognize high poetic genius with gratitude and cheques did not do it, what wonder that his landlady and tradesmen in the King's Road were unsympathetic?

"I can't go on with my tragedy till I get something to eat," said the poet, "but how lucky that it *is* a tragedy! If it had been a comedy I should have spoiled it, for I've been almost without food for three days. Oh, I *am* hungry!"

As he took a bundle of rejected manuscripts from his pocket and went to the table he observed vacancies among his sacred papers, for four acts of a five-act tragedy and a thick pile of lyrics had vanished. Before he could exclaim there was a knock at the door and his landlady came in.

"My tragedy, my tragedy——" cried Eustace.

"I took it," said Mrs. Jones.

"How dare you?" asked Eustace. "Give it me at once."

"When you pay your bill," retorted Mrs. Jones. "I've also taken a bundle of lyrics and the satire on your uncle which you read to me."

The poet waved his hands at her wildly.

"Don't be so absurd, Mrs. Jones. You talk about money as if I made it. Do you think I'm the Mint? Why don't you write to my uncle and send him the bills again?"

"No, no, Mr. Rankine, I'm not to be put off in that way," said Mrs. Jones. "What is the use of telling me he will pay when you have written a bitter satire on him because he cut off your allowance?"

"I'm sorry I ever showed you that satire," said Eustace; "but as you are far better educated than any landlady I ever owed money to, you ought to see that I shall some day be rich and successful. Have you anything to eat downstairs?"

Mrs. Jones replied in the excellent English of a lady who had seen better days that she had plenty to eat downstairs, but that, so far as she knew, it would remain there.

"And I insist on your writing something with money in it, Mr. Rankine."

"What's the use of talking when I'm doing a great tragedy? Have you any coal to spare?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Jones. "I have."

"Can I have a scuttleful?" asked Eustace, hopefully.

"No, you can't," said Mrs. Jones. "Good-night, Mr. Rankine. I will take great care of your tragedy, and the lyrics, and the satire, and you shall have them as soon as you pay your bill. If you don't I will sell them."

"That," said Eustace with conviction, "is a delusion on your part, but as you won't give up the tragedy I wish you'd read the third act and tell me what you think of it."

"I will," said Mrs. Jones, graciously.

"And I'm going round to Mr. Johnson's studio to see if he has anything to eat," said Eustace. "If anyone calls say I'm there, please."

"I will tell him," said Mrs. Jones, "that a poet who has lost his senses has gone to see an artist who never had any, and owes me money to this day."

And ten minutes later Eustace, filled with hope, stood outside the door of Johnson's studio. A very rich smell of fried fish greeted him as he knocked and went in without waiting. He found five artists there. His heart sank, for they did not look so hungry as usual.

"I say, where's the fried fish?" he asked, eagerly.

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"Eaten," said the artists, gloomily.

"Then can anyone lend me half a crown?"

"Total remaining assets of the crowd threepence-ha'penny," said Johnson.

"I've not eaten anything to speak of for days, and Mrs. Jones has impounded my tragedy and my satire on my uncle as security," said Eustace.

"Quite a remarkable woman that, but far too optimistic," said Johnson. "I owe her money, too, and she took seventeen pictures of mine as security."

"I believe she could write satire herself," said Eustace, "she seems to think any real artist or poet ought to starve."

"It's a belief commonly held in the King's Road," said Johnson. "Now, there's that soulless butcher Simpson, who has not only refused me credit but has put a shoulder of mutton I never had in the bill."

"He's a very, very disagreeable man," said Eustace. "I don't like him at all. Then he actually owes you a shoulder of mutton?"

"Obviously," said Johnson. "I make it over to you."

"By Jove, do you?" asked Eustace, thoughtfully. "Then why should I starve if I own a shoulder of mutton?"

"The way the whole commercial-minded populace combines to cramp our growth and keep us thin is most discreditable," said Johnson.

The others agreed it was atrocious. Hawkins, who did aquatints when he could afford the materials, urged, however, that most artists could easily be dispensed with.

"And being in a gloomy, hopeless mood," said Hawkins, "I have a grave suspicion that four of us, including myself, would be better dead."

"And which two ought to live?" asked Johnson.

"Only you and young Rankine there," said Hawkins. "We're fools of talent and you two are geniuses."

"Am I a genius?" asked Rankine; "you really think so?"

"Yes," said Hawkins, who had a passion for poetry. "And, of course, you will be starved to death. Won't it be romantic? Your uncle will then regret cutting off your allowance, which was partly ours, too, just because you wouldn't desert Bohemia for Australia."

"Three groans for Rankine's uncle," said Johnson.

And they gave Mr. Brown of Boomoonoomana three groans.

"Now for his other uncles," said Hawkins, "and some of ours."

And they groaned again in chorus as Eustace departed.

When he got back to the King's Road the earlier shades of evening were falling and the sparkle of the tempting shops, which at a less hungry time might have inspired him to some lyrical outburst, now only caused him internal anguish.

"I am very hungry," said Eustace. "Sometimes I thought I was, but now I am! And Hawkins said Johnson and I shouldn't

"Next moment Eustace was running

be allowed to starve. If that jam was outside I would steal it. My uncle in Australia has cut off my allowance. My uncle in the King's Road has my watch and sleeve-links. The only person who has behaved generously to me is Johnson, who gave me that shoulder of mutton which was surreptitiously introduced into his bill. Ah, this is Simpson's den of Cacus!"

Eustace saw Simpson himself holding a cleaver and addressing himself to duty. He noted everything with strange clearness, but nothing was so magically clear as a particular shoulder of mutton hanging on a hook in the very front of the shop. At the sight of it madness seized on him. He became blind to everything else. He did not

round the corner with the butcher and the constable after him."

even see a young athletic policeman standing within twenty yards. For in some strange way, that shoulder of mutton was obviously Johnson's.

"And if his, mine!" said Eustace. The next moment he was running round the corner and down Church Street with the butcher and the constable after him. Simpson ran well; the policeman, who was twenty yards behind, ran better; but Eustace outpaced the two. He made a magnificent effort, and in despair of catching him the butcher threw his cleaver and missed his mark by a hairsbreadth. As the weapon clattered along the pavement Eustace stooped and picked it up and still kept ahead of the policeman, who had passed Simpson. As the flying poet was burdened with the mutton and the cleaver he might have been caught at last had he not seen a motor-car, which was just gathering speed, coming along Cheyne Walk. With one tremendous sprint he ran up alongside it and jumped on the step. The chauffeur did not notice him, but the man inside leant out of the window as the shouting and the tumult died away in the distance.

"Who are you?" asked the man in the car.

"My name is Rankine," replied Eustace, breathlessly.

"Oh, is it? You don't say so! And what the devil did you jump up here for?"

"Because they were after me," said Eustace.

"Who are they?"

"A butcher and a policeman."

"Why were they after you?"

"Because I took something which morally belongs to me," said Eustace.

"What was it you took?"

"A shoulder of mutton," said the poet.

"Have you got it with you?" asked the other man.

"Oh yes, rather!" replied Eustace.

"Then come inside."

And Eustace opened the door and got in.

"Sit down," said his new friend. "Why did you take this shoulder of mutton?"

"Because I wanted it badly," said Eustace.

"Why did you want it badly?"

"Because I am hungry," said Eustace.

"Had you no means of getting food by more legitimate methods?"

"I have no means but a volume of lyrics

and a tragedy in five acts which I can't sell," said Eustace.

"A tragedy in five acts! Then you have no money?"

"I haven't," said Eustace.

"But why not?"

"Because I am a poet with a cruel uncle," said Eustace.

"By Jove, a cruel uncle! I'm getting deeply interested," said his companion. "Are you a good poet?"

"Hawkins says I am a genius."

"Bravo, Hawkins! But if you are a genius, geniuses surely make money," said his friend.

"That's where you are mistaken," replied Eustace, fairly groaning at human unintelligence; "it's because they are that they can't. Geniuses never make money till they are dead."

"Why not?"

"Editors don't think they are geniuses, and if they did they wouldn't be. Don't you see that?"

"Not clearly, I own," said the deeply interested inquirer.

"It's perfectly simple," said Eustace. "Genuises are poor. If editors bought their stuff they wouldn't be. If they sold it all at good prices they would be rich and couldn't be geniuses. That's logic."

"I had no idea that logic was so difficult," said his friend. "But I suppose you mean that the more you have the less you are a genius."

"According to the principles I laid down, yes," said Eustace.

"Then, as you possess a shoulder of mutton you are less a genius than you were. Is that logic?"

"I think there's a fallacy in it somewhere," said Eustace.

"Perhaps there is, but I should like to know what made you think the mutton morally yours."

EUSTACE told him how he had acquired a moral title to it from Johnson, a great unknown painter.

"I see," said his friend. "The genius Johnson acquired a title to it and passed it on to you. I like the logic of the whole proceeding. I hope it is a good shoulder of mutton?"

"I thought so when I took it," said Rankine. "But I'm not a real judge of mutton, raw. I do so wish it was cooked."

"How were you going to cook it?"

"Now you mention it I don't know," said Rankine. "Mrs. Jones refuses to give me any more coals. She is my landlady. She reads poetry but won't give me any more food, though I assure her daily that it will be all right in the end."

"I see," said the other man. "Then you haven't paid her for your room, or your food, or coals?"

"Not lately," said Eustace. "But, of course, I owe for it. Nothing satisfies her, nothing! And now she has taken my great tragedy, and some lyrics, and a satire on my uncle who cut off my allowance, and won't give them up. And when I found the artists had eaten all the fried fish Johnson transferred the mutton to me. The fish being eaten was the last straw."

"Yet it seems to have led to a notable success," said his friend.

"I don't seem to think a raw shoulder of mutton the success I did," said Eustace, mournfully, looking at the mutton. "I can't eat it raw. I wonder what my uncle, the one I wrote my satire about, would think of it?"

"Do you mean of your stealing it, Mr. Rankine?"

"Oh, no! Of it as mutton. He owns several sheep. I don't know how many. It does seem so unfair."

He sighed deeply.

"What is unfair?"

"That he should have several sheep and that I should only have part of one, and raw at that," said Eustace, disconsolately.

"Why doesn't your uncle keep on helping you?"

"I can't imagine," said Eustace, "but as I'm his only nephew he thinks I ought to go to Australia. That's absurd. What would he think if I wrote and said I wanted him over here because he was my only uncle?"

"Is he?" asked the other.

"No, but the logic is the same," said Eustace. "So he cut off my allowance, saying that I could help him to grow sheep if I liked, and that all I had to do was to go to some beastly office in Leadenhall Street to get a passage to Sydney for nothing."

"Well, why not? You seem to like mutton."

"I told him I wouldn't so much mind if the sheep were in London," said Eustace. "I even wrote and said that if he was so set on my having sheep, would he help me to get some to keep in the parks? You may have noticed sheep in some of the London parks. I don't know how they get there or who owns them, but I shouldn't mind having some there. But he said the idea was absurd and if I didn't pack up and come out he would cut off my—my——"

"Mutton?" said the stranger.

"No, allowance," said Eustace, "though it comes to that when you think of it. And that's why I owe my rent and why I'm here in a stranger's car with a raw shoulder of mutton, not knowing how or where I shall cook it. And I'm so hungry. Have you

ever been ? What's your name ? You seem rather nice to me considering the circumstances, and I should like to know."

" My name's Hunt, John Hunt," said his friend, " and yours, you say, is Rankine. Do you mind telling me your Christian name ? "

" It's Eustace," said the poet.

" Eustace Rankine ! By Jove, I was beginning to think so," cried Mr. Hunt. " Eustace Rankine, the poet ! "

" Oh, I say," cried Eustace, " you must have read some of my poems ! "

" No, I never did, but I've heard of them ! How remarkable, but never mind. Didn't you ask me if I was ever hungry ? I am now."

" Oh, are you ? " asked Rankine. " I say, you may have half the mutton if we can get it cooked."

" Thanks, awfully, but I might get half your sentence if you got caught," said Mr. Hunt.

" Then I might get less," said Eustace.

" Tell me about your uncle," said Mr. Hunt. " What's his name ? You see, I come from Australia myself."

" Do you ? Have you any sheep ? "

" Like your uncle I have several," said the Australian. " And pray don't mind my being an uncle, too."

" Oh, I say, are you ? I wish you were my uncle. I'm sure mine wouldn't have been so kind to me."

" What is your uncle's name ? " asked Hunt.

" Brown," said Eustace.

" I wonder what Brown," said Hunt ; " there are several Browns in Australia. What's his other name ? "

" Thomas," said Eustace.

" Good," said Mr. Hunt. " Thomas Brown. I know four. Has your uncle got a station ? "

" Oh, no," said Eustace, " he has nothing to do with railways. He breeds sheep."

" Don't you know that a station is where you breed them ? "

" Is it ? It seems a queer place to do it in. Do you know Euston and King's Cross?"

" Well," said Mr. Hunt. " But never mind them. What's the name of your uncle's place ? "

" I can't spell it or pronounce it. But it's full of o's."

" Are there no other letters ? "

" Yes, m's and n's."

" Is there a B in it ? " asked Mr. Hunt.

" I think so," said Eustace ; " it sounds as if a cow lowed there."

" Then it's Boomoonoomana," said Hunt.

" So it is. How clever of you. Say it again."

And Hunt said it again.

" So your uncle is Thomas Brown, of Boomoonoomana, is he ? "

" Yes," said Eustace. " Has he really any sheep to speak of ? "

" Like me he has several," said Hunt. " I know him."

" When you go back to Australia tell him what I think of him," said Eustace, bitterly, " and tell him about this shoulder of mutton. It might touch him on the raw, for heaven knows it's so raw it has damped my trousers. And I do so wonder what to do with this cleaver."

" You never spoke about a cleaver," said Mr. Hunt.

" I slipped the beastly greasy thing in my pocket and forgot it in my agitation," said the poet. " Just think of Shelley or Keats in a motor-car with a large bit of damp mutton and a cleaver ! "

" Did you steal that, too ? " asked the Australian.

" Oh, no," said Eustace. " Why should I steal a cleaver ? I didn't take a whole sheep. The butcher threw it at me in Church Street, and it clattered along the pavement and I picked it up. Shall I sling it out of window ? "

" You might hit someone."

" Very likely he would be an uncle," said Eustace, savagely. " Would you like it ? If you have several sheep it might come in useful ! "

" Thanks. Give it me," said the Australian. " I'll find a use for it at the hotel."

" What hotel ? " asked Eustace.

" Mine. And you're going to it, old chap."

" Am I ? What for ? "

Mr. Hunt clapped him on the shoulder.

" To cook the shoulder of mutton, young fellow."

" That's a very good idea," said Eustace.

" I suppose you won't mind giving a dinner to my brother-in-law and my niece, as well as to me ? " he asked, as the car moved on.

" I haven't any money. What *do* you mean ? "

" You have the shoulder of mutton, haven't you ? "

" Yes, I've got that, but——"

" Don't raise objections. I'll arrange it. My niece will be delighted. She is fond of poetry and will be really glad to meet you."

" Then I don't mind meeting her," said Eustace.

" And when we get to the hotel you must bring in the mutton and I will carry this cleaver," said Mr. Hunt.

The steps of the hotel were very full : the lounge was even fuller, but both became still more crowded as Mr. Hunt got out of his car carrying a large cleaver. The excitement grew when he was followed by a very tall, slim, and handsome young man, without a hat and with dishevelled hair, with a shoulder

"The crowd buzzed with inquiries as to why the popular Australian millionaire had a cleaver, and why that handsome young fellow carried a shoulder of mutton."

of mutton. Such a sight had rarely been seen in the hotel, and the porters who were hastening to Mr. Hunt as if they were wasps and he a ripe peach were paralyzed into momentary inaction.

"Come, Eustace," said Mr. Hunt.

"Shall I carry the—the cleaver for you, sir?" the head porter asked in an agitated tone of voice.

"Thanks, I'll carry it myself," said Hunt. "Do you want any assistance with the shoulder of mutton, Eustace?"

"I think not," said Eustace.

"Then come on," said Hunt, and the crowd opened and let them through, as the whole assembly, forgetting what they were there for, buzzed with rapid inquiries as to why the popular Australian millionaire had a cleaver, and why that handsome young fellow, who looked so pale and intellectual—"ah, and so sweet," as many of the women said—carried a shoulder of mutton. Everyone said there must be a story attached to the drama, and as Hunt and Eustace entered the lift the guests inside interrogated the porter as to the meaning of things, while

those outside cross-questioned the chauffeur. But by this time the head porter had recovered himself.

"It is Mr. Hunt's hobby," he said. "He collects cleavers."

"But that doesn't explain the shoulder of mutton and that dear, sweet young fellow who looks like a poet," urged the lady who had acted as spokeswoman.

"The mutton, madam," said the head porter, "is probably to try the cleaver on."

And in the meantime Mr. Hunt, still holding the cleaver in his hand, was explaining in his sitting-room to a paralyzed lift-boy that he wanted the head waiter.

In less than a minute the head waiter, who had observed part of the proceedings through the key-hole, knocked at the door.

"Did you ask for me, sir?" he inquired.

Mr. Hunt said he sent for him with a view of discovering how long it took to cook a shoulder of mutton at the Spitz. The head waiter opined that the general view was that a quarter of an hour to the pound was needed, and when Eustace, at Hunt's request, put the shoulder of mutton into the reluctant hands extended to receive it, he declared that as it weighed about five pounds it would take an hour and a quarter. Mr. Hunt considered this absurd. It might do for the Savoy or the Piccadilly, but from *his* hotel he required far greater expedition, or he would leave it. The head waiter, recognizing the danger to his own status if this happened, hastened to reconsider his verdict, and said it should be ready under the hour.

"Very well," said Hunt. "There will be four of us. And in the meantime, Eustace, are you too hungry to wait for dinner?"

By this time Eustace was almost too much confused to know if he really was hungry or only suffering from a series of internal and external hallucinations.

"I'm not quite sure," he replied.

"You must be hungry," said Hunt. He turned to the head waiter. "My young friend is a poet and has eaten nothing for three days. What do you do in such cases?"

The head waiter gasped.

"With those who have been without food for three days, sir? We—we usually give them in charge, sir!"

"Do you hear that, Eustace? See the danger you expose yourself to by this ridiculous habit. Shall I send for a policeman or some biscuits and sherry? And in the meantime the mutton is being delayed."

"I prefer biscuits and sherry," said Eustace.

When the biscuits and sherry arrived Eustace applied himself to them eagerly.

"You look better already," said Hunt, after a few moments.

"I feel better," replied Eustace, warmly.

"Just sit tight while I go away for a minute," said Hunt. "I must tell my niece I have brought a guest."

Presently Hunt came back. As Eustace turned, there stood before him the most wonderful vision he had ever seen in his life. She was slim, and tall, and gracious. Her name, it seemed, was peculiarly and deliciously romantic. It was, in fact, Kitty Brown, and Eustace, a great student of words, saw it proved once more that their beauty was not inherent in their nature but in their happy accidental connotations. Till that moment he had hated the name of Brown and had no passion for Kitty, but now Brown had become absolutely beautiful and Kitty adorable as the sign and signal of one who might have fed on honey-dew and drunk the milk of Paradise.

"And this, Kitty, is Mr. Eustace Rankine of whom I spoke just now. By a remarkable coincidence I find that you have actually read some of his verses."

"His poetry!" said Kitty, reprovingly, and these words, and the voice which spoke them, finally subdued Eustace for ever.

"This is quite, quite wonderful," said Kitty. "To think that I have read some poems of yours and that my uncle should have met you——"

"In a very remarkable and romantic way," said Hunt.

"Is most delightful," said Kitty.

"No doubt you two can find something to talk about while I go and rouse your dad," said Hunt. "Remember what I told you, Kitty."

"Yes, uncle, but——"

"There is no 'but,'" said Hunt, as he closed the door.

"Your uncle is a most remarkable man, Miss Brown," said Eustace, lingering on the rapturous monosyllable. "Isn't he?"

"Yes, but his sense of humour is quite devastating," replied Kitty.

"Is it? So's mine; but somehow I don't feel so bitter to my Australian uncle as I did."

"Have another biscuit," said Hunt, who caught the last words as he came in again, "and tell us why you don't."

"Thanks, awfully," said Eustace. "If it hadn't been for him I shouldn't have met Mr. Hunt, for I shouldn't have——"

"Acquired a moral title to a shoulder of mutton," said Hunt. "Tell my niece about it. She is a revolutionary herself."

"I'm glad of that," said Eustace. "Then she won't take the silly conventional view of my action. But you see, Miss Brown, that it was entirely due to my uncle that I stole the mutton at all."

"Did you really steal it?" asked Kitty, enthusiastically. "You have great social courage."

"Please don't exaggerate it. My view and Johnson's is that I didn't really *steal* it," said Eustace, modestly. "The butcher said Johnson owed for it, but Johnson never had it at all, and he transferred it to me and I took it from the hook in Simpson's shop. I am prepared to argue for hours that I did perfectly right. The only difference in the situation is that I now owe for it and Johnson doesn't."

"Mr. Rankine also acquired this cleaver," said Hunt, producing it.

"Simpson threw it at me in Church Street, Chelsea, and I picked it up as I ran," said Eustace.

"Like Atalanta?" said Kitty, clapping her hands.

"Ah, you know about Atalanta, do you?" cried Eustace, in delight to find that someone from such a wild place as Australia could suggest a classical simile. "Yes, like Atalanta, though I didn't lose the race, for, snatching the cleaver from the pavement, I leapt upon the step of Mr. Hunt's car. And instead of pushing me off he kindly asked me to come inside and was *most* reasonable about the shoulder of mutton."

"I'm sure my uncle would be," said Kitty.

"Many would have taken a conventional view and pushed me off," said Eustace.

"Surely not in such circumstances," said Kitty.

"Oh, yes, they would have pushed me off without inquiring into the circumstances," said Eustace. "I believe *my* uncle would have pushed me off. Thank heaven it was *your* uncle, Miss Brown."

"Darling uncle," said Kitty.

"Thanks," said Hunt.

"Until you said it," cried Eustace, "I couldn't have believed 'darling' and 'uncle' would go together. You see, my uncle, who is Brown of—of—what is he Brown of, Mr. Hunt?"

"Of Boomoonoomana, Rankine."

"Yes, of Boomoonoomana," cried Eustace. "Once I said it sounded like an excited barnyard. And Brown of Boomoonoomana! Imagine a—a poet in such a place."

"Some might find it hard to do so," said Kitty, "but why not try it for a month? I like Boomoonoomana, myself."

Eustace hastened to apologize.

"Oh, if you know it, it's different, Miss Brown. I might get to like it. What I said was only the reflected result of my deeply considered dislike of my uncle. By the way, is the other Mr. Brown you say is coming to dinner your father, Miss Brown?"

"Yes," said Kitty.

"I shall be glad to meet him," said Eustace. "If I meet a few more nice people from Australia I shall begin to think that my uncle may not be so bad after all."

AT that moment the door opened and Kitty's father came in. Eustace thought him a fine-looking man and almost worthy to have such a daughter.

"Dad, dear," said Kitty, "this is the Mr. Eustace Rankine I spoke to you about, the very Mr. Rankine whose poetry I liked so much."

"I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Rankine," said Mr. Brown.

"So—so am I," said Eustace, wondering as he said it if that was the right way to put it, and making up his mind to see if it looked correct when written down.

"It seems that you and Jack Hunt ran across each other in a rather remarkable way. It was in Chelsea, wasn't it?" asked Mr. Brown.

"Yes, in Chelsea, at the bottom of Church Street, near the church," said Eustace. "I —I introduced myself."

"Yes, I heard so," said Mr. Brown.

"It was all owing to a most peculiar concatenation of circumstances," said Eustace. "But I explained them to Mr. Hunt as we came along."

"So I understand," said Mr. Brown. "I hope to hear all about it presently. Hunt tells me your uncle is a namesake of mine."

"Yes, he's Brown of Boomoonoomana," said Eustace. "You are not any relation of his, Mr. Brown? I shouldn't like to say anything unkind of him if you and Miss Brown are relations."

"I give you my word that I'm no relation of his," said Mr. Brown.

"What do you think of him?" asked Eustace.

"It's difficult to say," said Mr. Brown. "In fact, I hesitate to give any definite opinion of the man. But Hunt and my daughter seem to like him."

"I see, you have suspicions as to his real character," said Eustace, "and though I am prepared to pay the greatest deference to anything Miss Brown says on the point, you can't get over the fact that he is my uncle, and like my other uncles cut off my allowance just as I was beginning to make real headway in my profession."

Mr. Brown seemed shocked.

"Do you mean to say all your other uncles cut you off, too?" he asked.

"As one man, without mercy," said Eustace, bitterly.

"I believe Brown of Boomoonoomana was under the impression that they still continued their allowance," said Mr. Brown, regretfully.

"He may have said so," said Eustace, "but he knew better. Didn't my landladies send him their bills?"

"I think something of the kind occurred," said Mr. Brown. "But your father's brothers?"

"They also object to poetry and prefer law and politics," said Eustace. "So when my landladies worried me until I couldn't write, I said 'Send the bills to my uncle: he owes me money.' And they sent them."

"And I begged Mr. Brown to pay them, Mr. Rankine," said Kitty. "Didn't I, father?"

"You did, my dear," said her father, "you did!"

"Oh, wasn't it awfully mean of him not to?" asked Eustace, warmly. "Of course I wouldn't say such things of him if he was a relative of yours or even a friend."

"I don't think I'm on quite as good terms with him as I was," said Mr. Brown, somewhat uneasily, "but surely he invited you to Australia?"

"Yes, he said I was to go to 122, Leadenhall Street, where they kept a ticket to Australia for me; but why should I go? If the Khan of Tartary had asked me to Tartary and sent me a ticket I shouldn't have gone," said Eustace. "I was busy with my five-act tragedy in blank verse with lyrics in it. Now, do you suppose a poet could finish a five-act tragedy in blank verse with lyrics in it at a place called Boomoonoomana?"

"Couldn't he?" asked Mr. Brown, doubtfully.

"Why, of course he couldn't," said Eustace. "I can imagine writers of a low class doing comic opera there. But if I had written at all it would have been biting satire."

"Would it?" asked Brown.

"And Brown of Boo-what's-it's-name would have rued the day I came," said Eustace. "Oh, I *can* write savage stuff! You've no idea. I've done it. About him, too! I'd like to read it you."

AND the head waiter announced dinner in the adjoining room. Hunt spoke to him aside.

"Have you done as I told you?"

"Yes, sir," said the head waiter.

"Your men don't understand English?"

"Not a word, sir."

"And anything you hear at dinner will go no farther?"

"Not for worlds, sir," said the head waiter.

"Then you will solve the mystery of the mutton and the cleaver," said Hunt.

"I shall be glad of that, sir," said the head waiter, with obvious relief.

"Your discretion will be greatly to your advantage," said Hunt.

"I shall be glad of that, too, sir," said the head waiter.

And they sat down to dinner.

"Are you hungry, Eu—I mean Mr. Rankine?" asked Mr. Brown.

"Have you ever been without food, except for a biscuit, for three days?" asked Eustace.

"Not since my pioneering time," said Mr. Brown.

"Then I have, and to-day's the third," said Eustace. "And I say, wasn't it immense for my Uncle Tom to ask me to go to Australia, as he said, to get valuable experience? He seems to think valuable experience can only be obtained in distant places with ridiculous names. Let him come to London and try to be a poet or a painter! Then he'd learn a bit. He thought he would lure me out there by telling me he'd starved in a desert and been without water for days. Of course, you can always get water in Chelsea, for there's the river, but you can go without food forty days for all the tradesmen care. I don't believe there's a single butcher or grocer in the King's Road who would have helped Keats, or a coalman who would have given Shelley a scuttle of coals for his *Ode to Night*. Oh, you can have lots of experience and adventure in Chelsea, Mr. Brown."

"So it appears," said Mr. Brown. "I don't suppose your uncle ever thought of it in that way."

"He seems regrettably one-sided as regards sheep," said Eustace, applying himself to the food with great earnestness. "Is this Burgundy, Mr. Hunt?"

"Yes," said Hunt.

"It is good," said Eustace, after trying it. "The soup is good, too."

He also said the fish was good.

"But I chiefly rely on the shoulder of mutton," said Hunt. "When that arrives we shall consider ourselves your guests, Rankine."

"Yes, it's really your dinner, Mr. Rankine," said Kitty.

"I'm so glad you weren't shocked about the shoulder of mutton," said Eustace. "Does Mr. Brown know how I acquired it?"

"Do you, dad? Did I explain it clearly?" asked Kitty.

"Your explanation was too much hurried to be clear," said her father, "but I gathered that owing to a queer combination of circumstances Mr. Rankine picked it up somewhere!"

"I took it from a hook in a butcher's shop in the King's Road," said Eustace. "I thought it looked good. The butcher was one with whom I had dealt when my uncles paid up. He's not a nice man. He refused to send his bills to Australia. So being very hungry——"

"Ah, here's the shoulder of mutton," said Hunt.

"I do so hope it's good and that you will all enjoy it," said Eustace, feeling that he was indeed now the host. "Shall I go on with the story? It's quite an experience."

"Please do," said Brown.

"You'll see that my Uncle Tom's idea that it would do me good to come out to New South Wales and have a few experiences was founded on a false view of Chelsea, as I said before, for landladies, and coal people, and butchers, and grocers seem to wish to crush artists and poets, and are utterly, utterly without sympathy. So to-night, when I came home, I was very hungry and thought I would read over my tragedy to see if I could deepen the gloom in the fourth act."

"Poor Mr. Rankine," said Kitty. She looked as if she could have pressed his hand if her father hadn't been there, and Eustace wished Mr. Brown was in Australia with his uncle.

"But what do you think? My landlady had taken it, and also a bundle of lyrics and my savage satire on my Uncle Tom," said Eustace. "And she wouldn't give them up."

"Then she has a passion for poetry?" asked Hunt.

"She's quite intelligent and likes some of it, but she didn't take mine for that reason," said Eustace. "Oh, no! It was to force me to write something 'with money in it.' Those were her loathsome words. If I didn't I must go. I was much upset, though not so much as I was by my last landlady, who said she'd forgive me the rent if I married her."

"How dreadful!" said Kitty.

"You would have thought so if you'd ever seen her," said Eustace. "I considered it far better to owe her the rent, so I ran away and went to the one who took my tragedy. I implored her to give it back, but she wouldn't. She says she'll sell it and the lyrics. I think she's mistaken. I can't. I went round to some studios and outside Johnson's studio I smelt fried fish, so I went in. But they had eaten it all. And we talked about art and the commercial system. And Johnson, who is an awfully clever chap, said that if he were I he would rob a church, or even a cathedral! And they knew all about my uncles. And Johnson, and Hawkins, who does the loveliest aquatints, called for groans for Mr. Brown of Boomoonoomana. And we all groaned him and my other uncles and some of theirs."

"What a remarkable scene," said Kitty. "Don't you think it was, dad?"

"Very," said Mr. Brown. "So they groaned Brown of Boomoonoomana especially, Mr. Rankine?"

"Most especially," said Eustace, "and Johnson made a lightning sketch of him as an ogre surrounded by sheep but eating a poet—me!"

"I'll give him a fiver for that sketch," said Hunt.

"I'll tell Johnson," said Eustace. "He *will* be glad!"

"I thought of buying it myself," said Brown, rather gloomily. "I wanted to make a present of it to Brown of Boomoonoomana."

"Oh, dad, did you?" asked Kitty.

"I think he might repent," said Brown. "I believe he does already."

"Don't you believe it of him," said Eustace. "You don't know him as I do. And then Johnson said Simpson (he's the butcher) had put a shoulder of mutton into his bill which shouldn't have been there. So Johnson owed for what he'd never had, and he said I might have it, which seemed quite fair, though, at the time, I didn't think I should ever get it. But one never knows, and after that I went away, for the smell of the fried fish was maddening, and as I passed Simpson's shop I felt in my bones that a shoulder of mutton there was rightly mine, and without a moment's hesitation I took it down and ran, and they followed me shouting, and the butcher threw his cleaver at me and missed me, so I picked it up and ran all the harder, and just at the bottom of Church Street I jumped on Mr. Hunt's car and got away."

HUNT turned to the head waiter.

"On the sideboard in the other room you will find a cleaver. Please bring it in."

"Isn't it a *most* remarkable story, dad?" asked Kitty. "*I* think it's wonderful."

"It shows a certain decision of character not to be looked for in a poet," said Brown.

"It was a sudden righteous impulse," said Eustace.

"And this—this is the cleaver," said Hunt, as the head waiter brought it in on a silver salver.

"It seems a very good cleaver as cleavers go," said Mr. Brown. "I'm glad it missed you, Mr. Rankine."

"So am I," said Eustace. "It's a good heavy cleaver, isn't it? I did think of keeping it as a trophy, but I gave it to Mr. Hunt."

"I collect them," said Hunt, gravely.

"Kitty, my dear," said Mr. Brown, "do you think that Mr. Rankine's uncle is quite the kind of man that our young poetic friend, to say nothing of the artist Johnson, has pictured him?"

Eustace turned to Miss Brown, anxiously.

"No," said Kitty, "I think Mr. Johnson went too far. I like Mr. Rankine's uncle very much."

"Oh, do you?" asked Eustace. "Then why didn't you say so before? I wouldn't have been so bitter. I would have restrained myself. I would not have mentioned Johnson's view of him at all. And I do so want to be just. If it comes to that, I much prefer my Uncle Tom to both of the others. I know my uncles in England. An uncle I only know by correspondence may be better than uncles I have stayed with."

"I'm sure he's much better," said Hunt.

"Then why didn't you say so before?" asked Eustace. "Do you like him, Mr. Brown?"

"Like him?" said Mr. Brown. "Well, I get on with him, and I think he's the kind of man that a good many would like."

"I love him," said Kitty.

"I wish you had said all this at first," exclaimed Eustace, "then I shouldn't have mentioned Johnson or said a word against my uncle. Why, if you love him, Miss Brown, I'll go to 122, Leadenhall Street, tomorrow, early!"

Just at the moment that Eustace announced his decision of sitting on the doorstep of 122, Leadenhall Street, wherever Leadenhall Street might be, the head waiter spoke to Mr. Hunt in a low voice.

"Indeed!" said Hunt. "It appears that a policeman wishes to speak to me."

"A—a policeman? Oh!" said Kitty.

She laid her hand on the poet's arm. Without a moment's hesitation he grasped it.

"Have you been exceeding the speed limit, Jack?" asked Mr. Brown.

"It was I exceeded the speed limit, and I suppose he wants me and the mutton," said Eustace, gloomily.

"Ought we to conceal it?" whispered Kitty.

"Most of it is concealed," said Eustace.

"Tell the constable to come in," said Hunt.

To Eustace it seemed that the constable looked like a man who could run a bit.

"Well, and what is it you want, constable?" asked Hunt, cheerfully.

The constable placed his helmet on a chair and produced a pocket-book.

"May I ask, sir, if you are the Mr. Hunt with a car No. LX 55?"

"I am," said Hunt.

"Did anyone jump on the step of your car this evening at the bottom of Church Street, Chelsea, in Cheyne Walk, sir?"

"He did," said Hunt.

"A very tall young man?"

Eustace thought he had his eye on him and made himself as short as possible.

"You are perfectly correct, constable."

"Was he in possession of a shoulder of mutton and a cleaver, sir?"

"Both," said Hunt.

"Did he say anything which led you to

suppose he was a butcher or the legitimate owner of the articles ? "

" Oh, no ! " said Hunt. " He told us quite frankly that he had stolen them. Didn't he, Eustace ? "

" Well," said Eustace, " I thought his view was that he had stolen the mutton but the cleaver had been given him."

" How far did he go with you, sir ? " asked the constable.

" All the way to this hotel," said Hunt, " and then he disappeared in the crowd. But he gave me the mutton and the cleaver."

He turned to the head waiter.

" Give me the cleaver. Ah, this is it, constable ! Would you like to have it ? "

" And the mutton, sir ? "

" This is it—would you like to have that, too ? The waiter will wrap it up for you," said Hunt.

" It's a very curious business, sir," began the constable.

" So we thought," said Hunt, hastily. " My young friend here and I were much surprised. While the head waiter is wrapping up the mutton and the cleaver, will you have a drink, constable ? "

" There being now no one else in the room I have no objection, sir," replied the constable. " But it is a very curious business, sir, and——"

" Do you think any information we have been able to give you will lead to the arrest of the young man who stole the mutton ? " interrupted Hunt.

" And was given the cleaver," said Eustace, firmly.

" I don't quite know, sir," replied the constable, thoughtfully. " I begin to think I could lay my hands on him. But there might be circumstances——"

" There are," said Hunt, casually putting his hand into his pocket.

" The young man might have been mad, sir," said the constable.

" He was not. I deny it," said Eustace, indignantly. " He was in a state of tremendous indignation at having had nothing to eat for three days."

" How natural of him," cried Kitty.

" And yet he left the mutton behind him, miss," said the constable, pensively.

" I forgot to tell you, constable, that pitying his condition I arranged for him to have a really good dinner," said Hunt. " Otherwise nothing would have induced him to part with it, even for a moment."

" He was a decently dressed, tall young man. And couldn't he run, just ! " said the constable, looking steadily at Eustace. " If I don't get him I shall have had a lot of trouble for nothing."

" Your profession is an arduous one," said Hunt, " but you will rise in it. I admire the way you spotted my number. I shouldn't like to think I had brought you up here for nothing. I couldn't bear the thought. Can I make it up to you in any way ? "

" There being no one else in the room you might, sir," said the constable. " Thank you, sir. The young gentleman I saw running must have taken the mutton for a lark."

" A very large lark," said Hunt.

" Good-night, sir, miss, and gentlemen," said the constable.

And he withdrew to find the head waiter outside.

" That's a most remarkable lot of gents in there," he said, pointing to the door with his thumb.

" All millionaires ! " said the head waiter, fervently.

" So I thought," said the constable, conscious of five Bradburys in his pocket. " Is the tall young gent one ? "

" Some day he'll be the richest of the lot," said the head waiter, hastily ; " and if that young lady in there doesn't mean to marry him you can take me for shifting that shoulder of mutton."

" D'ye think he could sprint a bit ? " asked the constable.

" How should I know ? " asked the head waiter.

" If ever he's in a quarter-mile and you know it, put your shirt on him," said the constable.

AS the door closed Eustace was the calmest person in the room, for while Mr. Hunt laughed, Kitty looked on the verge of tears, and Mr. Brown kept opening his mouth as if about to say something, and said nothing after all.

" I'm sure that policeman knew me," said Eustace.

" He admired your running no end," gurgled Kitty's uncle.

" I always could run," said Eustace, modestly, " but I do wonder if I ought to go back to Chelsea now. I wouldn't lose my tragedy for anything, and I don't know where I shall sleep."

" You mustn't risk it, Mr.—Mr. Rankine," said Kitty.

" I'll get you a room here, my boy," said Mr. Brown.

" You *are* good to me," said Eustace.

" And I'll get your tragedy for you to-morrow," said Hunt, " your comedy deserves it."

Eustace beamed on him.

" That *is* good of you. I do wish you were all going to Australia at once. I shall miss you so ! "

" No, you won't, my boy," said Mr. Brown, " We're coming with you."

"Yes," said Kitty, "we are!"

"I *am* pleased," said Eustace; "and now if I had any money I'd cable to my poor lonely uncle to say I was coming."

"Dad, do you hear that?" cried Kitty. "Why don't you speak? Oh, Cousin Eustace, I'm so glad!"

"Cousin Eustace," cried Eustace, thunder-

"'That's a most remarkable lot of gents in there,' said the constable, pointing to the door with his thumb."

struck. "What, what, do you mean?"

And just as Kitty sat down suddenly and cried beautifully, knowing that she was of the elect who are rather more than less lovely for tears, her father laid his hand on the poet's shoulder.

"My dear boy, I'm Brown of Boomoo-noomana," said Kitty's father.

Two Minutes' Silence

by ROLAND PERTWEE

ILLUSTRATED BY E. F. SHERIE

". . . . and that the Nation might turn its thoughts reverently back to the four years of peril and sacrifice from which it had emerged, a decree was made that there should be a two-minutes' silence throughout the land. . . ."

THE actual cause of the trouble hardly concerns us since causes are for philosophers and results for individuals. The result was very painful to both parties involved. They arrived at it by easy stages—through irritation to annoyance—annoyance to anger—anger, since it is surprising, to forgiveness—thence over the old ground again to anger without forgiveness, and finally to open hostility by day and night and unremitting domestic warfare. The symptoms are well known to most observers—they occur among nice people as well as nasty.

Now since this story has for its essence the moral: Pause and consider, let us, before it is too late, record the fact that Betty and Boyd Norman were very nice people indeed—before they fell into the habit of argument and discord. They married in a delightful hurry during the early days of war, loved each other to distraction in season and out, behaved like perfect lunatics when the all-too-brief leaves brought them together for a flash past of wonderful days, wrote the most extravagant letters at every opportunity, and fell headlong into the raptures of furniture-buying, house-getting, and wondering if they would want a nursery just so soon as the nations were at peace. In a word, they conducted themselves in a very normal and proper manner and were a pattern to all to whom the question of marriage had presented itself.

There may be some who at this point will shake their heads and say, "War weddings always have turned out badly." Not at all. It was a very nice wedding, and the war had nothing to do either with its making or its breaking. In support of which statement be it said they kissed each other for the first time in a Hampstead conservatory in the year 1913, and their original falling out (this savours of a breach of confidence) was occasioned by Boyd inadvertently shaking his fountain-pen over the skirt of a new dove-grey charmeuse gown Betty was wearing for the first time on an afternoon in January, 1920. He made the mistake of treating the matter lightly and she of treating it too seriously. He regretted they had subscribed to a fire insurance rather than an ink insurance, and she regretted that he should supply her with humour in place of contrition. His contrition, when it ultimately arrived, had a delay action fuse—it missed its mark and exploded ineffectually after the door had slammed. It is perfectly obvious he should have pursued her, but he didn't. Later in the evening, feeling very sorry, he went out and bought a tube of "Movall" (presumably in the belief that it contained an olive branch). This excursion resulted in his being ten minutes late for dinner—a circumstance accompanied by a reproach. Accordingly he threw the "Movall" out of the window and declined to eat his soup.

When asked what was the matter with it he replied that he expected it was all right.

Could anything be more stupid? But there is a serious aspect that cannot be ignored. Discord possesses a curious attraction. Harmony is delightful, but discord is magnetic. It is exciting to add a wrong note to a chord just to see what the effect will be, but he who does so forgets that he is rendering his ear callous to sweetness by indulging in cacophony. Easy to say, "Oh, I'll play it right next time." There is always the danger that he won't bother whether it is right or wrong. The taste for bitterness is readily acquired and becomes a common necessity and habit.

We will not attempt to accompany them on their descent from happiness. They went by the all-too-familiar ladder that is runged with intolerance, indignation, jealousy, and abuse, and which leads to a nasty dark place in whose divided ways people very easily lose one another.

On the morning of November the eleventh, 1920, they had a row, in the middle of which, actually speaking, our story begins.

And this was the worst row ever, because neither of them had lost their tempers and were merely "saying things" with calm and calculating deliberation.

Betty, being a woman, was naturally the cleverer, and what she said hurt most.

But Boyd had decided not to mind that, because he had something dreadful to say and was only waiting for the opportunity to say it.

What he proposed to say was this:—

"If you'll make a list of the furniture you wish to keep I'll arrange for the remainder to be collected."

(A little oblique, you will observe, studiously polite, and wholly damnable.)

SOMEHOW or other at ten minutes to eleven the loud pedal went down on the argument. An unlooked-for fierceness took possession of their voices. Betty's pretty cheeks fired to a letter-box scarlet and Boyd's hands trembled uncontrollably.

From the street below came the solid roar of traffic—the honk and bleat of horns—the rustle of a thousand feet upon pavements—the cries of newsboys and the tapping of a blind man's stick. Life seemed to be moving very rapidly and noisily towards dissolution.

"I hate you—hate you!" said Betty.

"Thanks; I knew that."

"You've been a beast—an absolute beast to me."

"Have I?"

"Yes."

"Very well, we won't dispute it."

"Oh, I wish—I wish I'd never seen you—I wish——"

"If that's what you wish, the solution is fairly obvious."

"What solution?"

"It's plain enough. Do you think it's possible for us to go on like this?"

"Do you think I want to?"

"All right, then; if that's how it goes we'd better make up our minds right away that——"

He hesitated, fixed her with his eyes, and drew a long breath. And at that moment the church tower opposite struck the first chime of eleven. Simultaneously every noise and movement in the street ceased as though a hand had been clapped over the mouth of the world.

Boyd was fumbling for words when the silence came and with it a memory of the cause. The nation was thinking of its dead. Betty looked at him, a shade of perplexity running across her anger, and he half raised his hand. That was all, but it was enough. They held each other's eyes—she red of cheek—he very white—waiting for the silence to break. On the tongue of each was a bullet destined for the heart of the other, and two minutes were theirs to steady the aim.

Now it is an established fact if you aim at an object too long you will find the foresight of your rifle will begin strange gyrations. It describes ellipses and arcs—it refuses to remain steady—it points at anything and everything except the mark intended. That is precisely what occurred with the minds of our protagonists. In the silence they lost direction. Present intention declined in sharp perspective to a perfectly-defined recollection of past events.

Within rather less than half a minute the anger had died out of Boyd's eyes and he saw the crimsoned little face confronting him transform through pink to ivory, and absurdly enough there was an impression of orange blossoms in her pretty hair.

He had gone half-way down the aisle to meet her, ignoring the best man's hoarse injunction, "Come back, you silly ass." If a man couldn't be a silly ass on his wedding day, when could he? Betty had starry eyes which gleamed approval as he came near. No one could have resisted them. He had wondered why every man in the church didn't spring to his feet and challenge his right to possess this miracle of loveliness.

And afterward. There were things to remember that they said to each other in the electric brougham. Married folks will endorse that and single must find out for themselves, but lest they go guessing all wrong or if they are by nature inarticulate, they have but to look at the third finger of a left hand encircled by a twinkly bright wedding ring, and they are pretty sure to stumble on the right words.

"And that the Nation might turn its thoughts reverently back to the four years—

There was no reception. They couldn't afford an afternoon spent that way when there was only a week's leave for the honeymoon. There was a revelation, though. A pure revelation—the most fragile and exquisite experience life can bestow. The miracle of unpacking "our trousseaux by ourselves." Boyd sat on the bed in the trim little hotel suite they had taken, and in sheer nervousness gazed at the toes of his faultless brown shoes while a small and timid person was shyly conveying the frailest creations of lace and lawn to a frankly Victorian chest of drawers. And though his feet were size ten and his hands extremely large he knew that by some amazing process he had found his way into fairyland and the Queen and all her gossamers were his and his alone. It was a very startling discovery, and the only means by which he could convey his appreciation was by kissing the palms of her hands a great many times.

"Didn't think anything could be so wonderful," he gulped.

And she gave the only possible reply:—

"Nothing could."

For that, I would have you know, is the way that fairies cause people to talk on wedding days.

The quickness of a leave deceives the heart. That is why Victoria Station at 7.40 a.m. was the rendezvous of England's tears. Smiles held sway until the leave train swallowed up its victims. After that more or less everyone cried in their particular fashion—some pretending they weren't—others flagrantly blowing their noses under the very eyes of door-slamming officials—

tuned to the utterance of the single phrase, "Take your seats — stand away there!"

But Betty didn't stand away. She jumped on the running board, put her arms round Boyd's neck and held on. A porter collared her at the platform end, or Heaven knows what might have happened. Before that she had kissed an old major in Boyd's carriage because he had no one to see him off. And the old major had said :—

"Blast you, sir, you've got a damn fine wife—damn you, sir—you have."

In the freemasonry of emotion invective has a throne.

Boyd spent the journey to Folkestone writing a letter, and he wrote another on arrival. Also he sent a wire which, for sheer extravagance of expression, would have taken the roof off an average post-office in any other period of history.

From Boulogne back to his division the train was packed with officers and men returning from leave. For eight hours Boyd and another man, a total stranger, discussed happiness in all its variants, the conversation having started from a mutually expressed appreciation of how wonderful women were. Certainly, during the war, men talked to one another.

—of peril and sacrifice from which it had emerged, a decree was made that there should be a two-minutes' silence throughout the land."

Memory knows no halting-places and bows to no direction. It skipped a year and stayed all standing in the very middle of "The Arras Stunt." And Boyd was reading a letter from Betty saying she wasn't frightened a bit but was glad. He had asked for leave on the strength of the letter—in the circumstances it was refused.

"Can't be done," the Colonel said. "And after all a man's better out of the way at those times."

THEY went over the top the following morning at a time that synchronized exactly with another event of vastly more terrible importance in Boyd's imagination. In his left hand he clutched a little perfumed kerchief Betty had sent him a few days before. It was his mascot for the double fight and it served him generously indeed. A fatherly 5·9 burst near by and peeled off a long strip of muscle from his upper forearm. The little white kerchief turned very red and the world became a drowsy place—that rumbled persistently with a curiously familiar rumble. When he opened his eyes trees and telegraph poles were flashing by across a square of window. It was difficult to realize one was in a train and that the train was running alongside a white steamer which bore a big red cross.

At seven o'clock that night Boyd was leaning against the luggage lift in Charing Cross Station. The worst cases were cleared by ambulance, but there was not enough accommodation for everyone. An officer in charge packed the walking wounded into taxi-cabs.

Boyd found himself sharing a taxi with a merry-eyed boy whose arm was bound across his chest. The driver had been instructed to proceed to the Third London General Hospital, but Boyd had other views.

"Look here," he said, "are you a sport?"

And the merry-eyed boy proved by his answer that he was.

And in view of the fact that he was in battle at 7 a.m. and was ringing his own door bell at 7 p.m., it is manifest that miracles occur even in the present century.

He tip-toed into his wife's room at the very moment her heart was near to breaking. The nurse had whispered in the hall, shaken her head toward a closed door, and told him the story that ends at its beginning, the smallest and saddest and shortest story in the world. And he laid his head beside Betty's on the pillow and their cheeks were pressed so close together that even tears could find no room to fall between them.

"We've all the blessed future, dear," he said, at last. "The wonderful, wonderful future that's so tremendous for us and that we're going to do such things with."

And at this point memory began to play pranks, flashing to and fro from past to present and back again.

What was that phrase about dividing the furniture—how did it go? And there was a prayer, too, of thanksgiving offered up on Armistice Day, two years before, and breathed simultaneously in South Kensington and at a spot somewhere near the Rhine. That prayer was repeated in two letters that crossed each other on the following day—letters that gave resolution the solidity of rock. How could anything ever happen to people who wrote letters like that and meant them? How could any contrivance of ink, circumstance, third party, or habit drive a wedge into such affinity? One could imagine the reception the cynic would have had who suggested the possibility—who had written on a post-card that it would be handy to conserve a phrase like the one about the furniture for future needs.

I do not know what passed through the mind of Betty Norman during the great silence of 1920. The mind of a woman is a mystery, like a lake of unfathomable depth. It was a lake of black, frozen water when the silence began, and who can say why the ice melted and reeds came to rustle at its shores, or when the lilies broke into flower upon the surface? Ours is an age of Tubes and telephones, but fairies have their hiding-places in tunnels as well as tree boles, and call through the windows of the hurrying trains or short-circuit the wire that connects us with Lewis and Lewis, specialists in divorce and judicial separation, with a spider thread of finest gossamer.

And, of course, if you give them two whole minutes to get busy—with an entire nation standing still—just anything is going to happen.

The engine of a motor started up in the street below, followed by another and another; the scrape of a dray-horse's hoofs taking up a heavy load, the whistle of a train somewhere down the line, the patter of feet on paving-stones, a muffin bell, the cry of a hawker and the tap, tap of a blind man's stick.

The silence was over and once again the people of England were passing on. Yet somehow in common sounds of life and movement there was a difference—a muffled note—as though the world walked felt-soled, tip-toeing through the afterglow of a supreme revelation, the revelation of a dead, dreadful, but glorious past.

"I can't speak," said Boyd; "oh, I can't say anything."

"You needn't," she whispered, "but just take hold of me, please."

And it can happen so if people will only trust themselves to believe it.

Coming Wonders of the Air

by HARRY HARPER

(Technical Secretary of the Civil Aerial Transport Committee.)

Illustrations by GEOFFREY WATSON

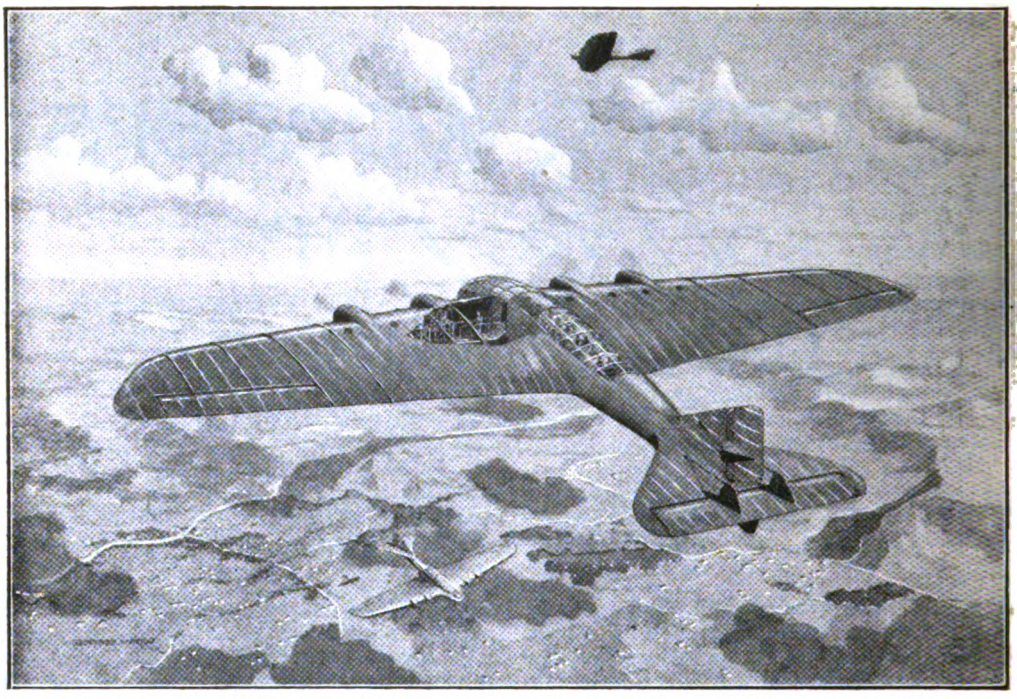
THE real wonders of the air are only just about to dawn. We are on the brink, now, of inventions and discoveries which will pale almost into insignificance everything which has been done hitherto.

We have seen a good deal, but we have not yet seen half there is to be seen; and the wonders to come are very much greater than those which have already taken place. We have thought of flying, so far, as something that is very wonderful, no doubt, but very far indeed from our own personal lives. But this is going to be the case no longer; we are not going to look on at flying any more; we are going to fly ourselves. And we are, in a sense, going to make our lives longer by doing so. We shall move at such speed from place to place that the time we spend on travel will be more than halved; which will leave us so much more time for resting or reading, or for the playing of games; or, if we are as active as we are all becoming to-day, we shall make use of these saved hours, days, and weeks in broadening our view of the world by visiting places and seeing things which it would be impossible for us to see in one short lifetime were it not for this marvel of one hundred miles an hour transport by air. This is what the era of the air will mean for you, and me, and everybody else; this, and a good deal more. Those experts who concentrate upon the "airways" between London and the Continent, and who will soon be operating thousands of miles of air routes throughout Europe, foresee very clearly now some of the scientific wonders which impend.

TAKE, for instance, the fascinating science of fog-fighting, and the navigation of an aeroplane through mist or cloud. Instruments almost human in the ingenuity of their action are now being devised to compensate the airman for his lack of actual vision when he is flying through a heavily-obscured air. One of the things he wants to know is his height above the ground. There is a device now being tested which contains special instruments which are so sensitive that they are affected by, and respond to, their nearness to earth or water. What it is possible to do with this machine is to cause a series of coloured electric bulbs to glow in the pilot's cockpit according to his proximity to the earth—a light of one colour recording so many thousands of feet above the ground, and so on; the lights changing, for example, as the aeroplane descends towards the ground. Thus, by a glance at whatever light may be glowing at the moment, the pilot can tell at once his altitude in relation, say, to the aerodrome he is approaching. And this is but one of many wonderful devices with which the mind of the aerial expert is busy.

One of the most striking things of to-day is the way in which aeroplanes are changing and improving in design in order to meet the requirements of real business transport through the air.

One wants to carry an air-borne load swiftly from place to place. At the same time one wants to do so with the least possible expenditure of engine-power and fuel. This means very largely that one must design one's machine so that it offers the



THREE MILES A MINUTE—THE AEROPLANE OF THE FUTURE.

THE BIG AIR EXPRESSES ARE EXPECTED TO DEVELOP INTO HUGE SINGLE WINGS AND LITTLE ELSE, WITH ENGINES, PASSENGERS, CREW, AND FUEL ACCOMMODATED WITHIN INSTEAD OF OUTSIDE THE GIANT MONOPLANE. SPEEDS OF TWO HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR ARE ANTICIPATED.

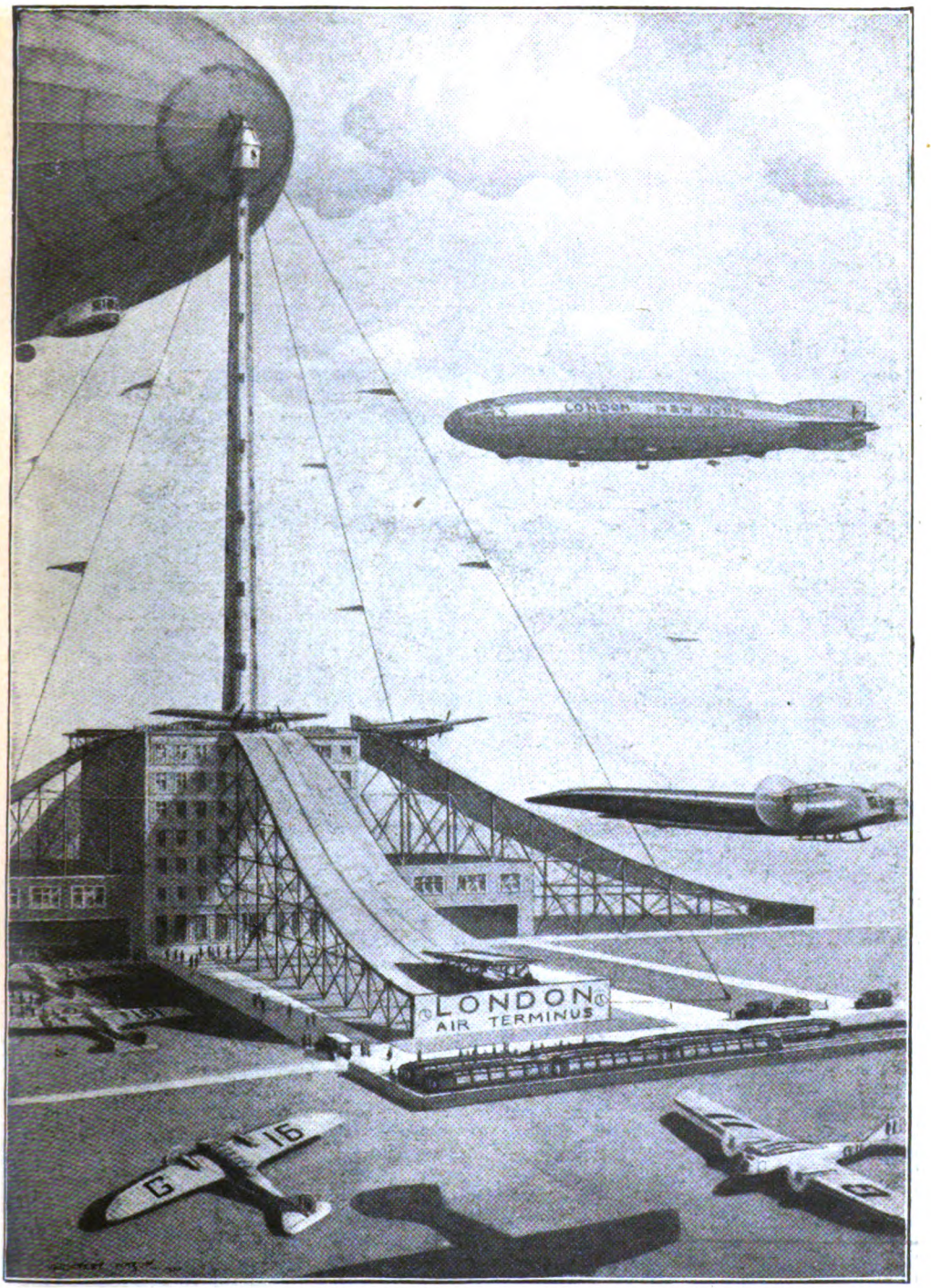
least possible resistance to its own rapid movement through the air. Thus we are turning from the biplane, or machine with two planes one above the other connected by struts and wires, to a monoplane machine which shall have only one wing and which shall eliminate the need for external struts and wires. And already the aeroplane designer is looking a stage farther ahead than this. He is visualizing the aeroplane of the future. And the next stage in high-speed craft will be the elimination of any external fuselage or hull. The big " air expresses " on our European airways are expected to develop into huge single wings and little else, with everything—engines, passengers, crew, and fuel—being accommodated within, instead of outside of, this great monoplane. In a contemplated design one of these big wings is as much as a hundred feet long and seven feet in thickness at its central sections. This will permit the designer to accommodate his entire load, either of passengers or cargo, inside the wing. He can provide an enclosed passenger saloon ten yards in length, several yards in width, and with ample headroom. Engines, too, would be inside the wing, driving propellers either in front of or behind it, and there would be room inside the wing, near the engines, for mechanics to move about at their work. These perfected monoplanes will have such small resistance to their own progress through the air that speeds of two hundred miles an hour, or slightly more, are expected even with a large passenger craft. This may mean an air express flight between London and Paris of only about an hour—as quick as the present railway journey down to Brighton !

A wonder we shall soon see realized in actual fact is the airship arrival and departure platform on the top of a huge steel tower.

Experiments conducted secretly during the war, and continued since, have now proved that big airships, or air liners, such as have been designed and are now building, for the Atlantic service between Europe and America, will require to go into their sheds only occasionally, like a ship into dock.

At all other times they will simply ride out in their appointed element, the air, just in the same way as a ship does on the sea, picking up and disembarking passengers from special aerial stations raised high above the ground.

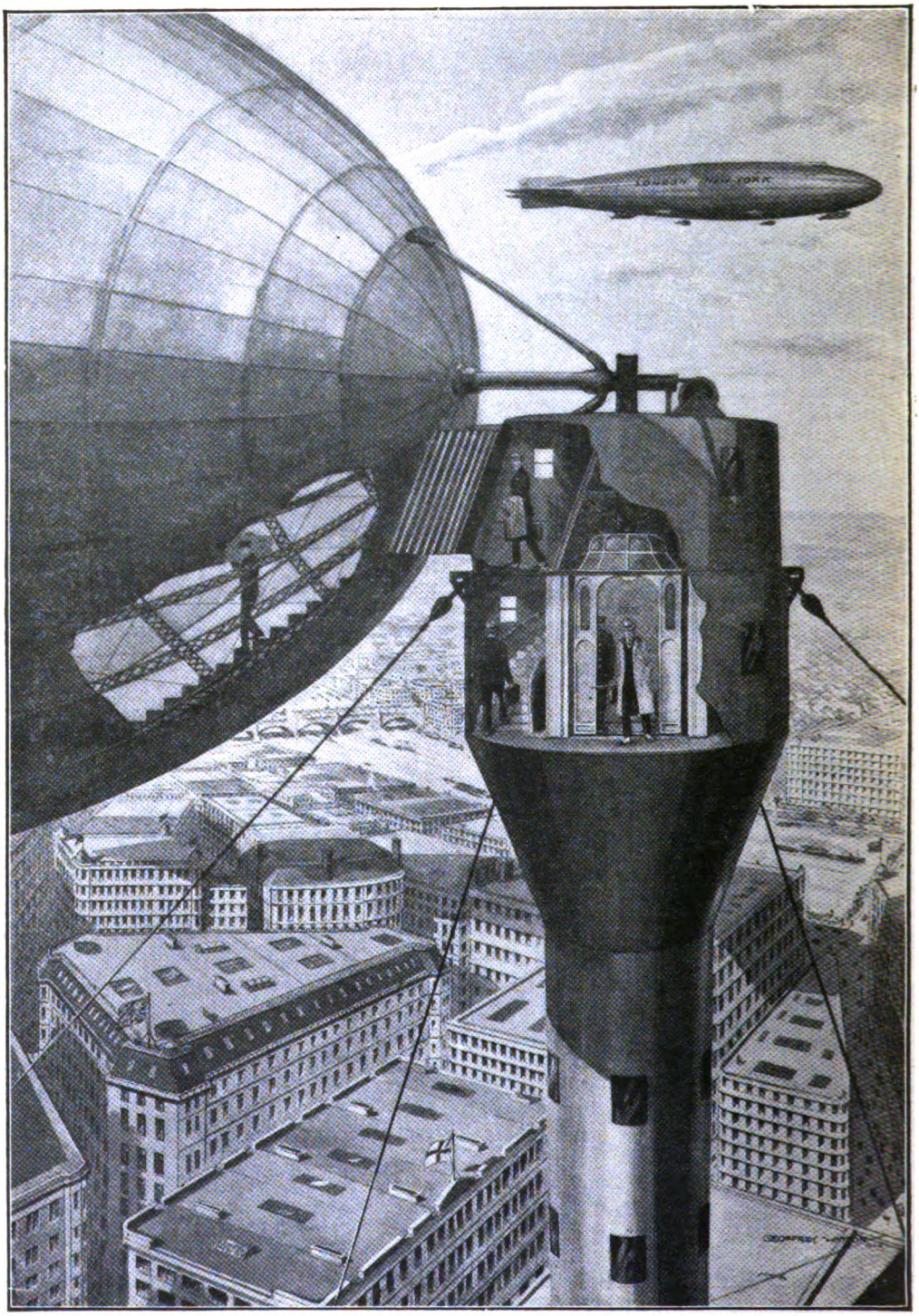
The latest designs for these airship stations,



THE CHARING CROSS OF THE AIR.

AN AIRSHIP AND AEROPLANE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PLATFORM. AT THE TOP OF THE TOWER, FLOATING QUITE FREELY IN THE AIR, AND WITH HER BOW ATTACHED TO THE TOWER BY A SPECIAL COUPLING, IS THE OCEAN-GOING AIRSHIP OF THE FUTURE.

(*The interior of the platform at the top of the tower is shown on the next page.*)



AN AERIAL PLATFORM, WITH AIRSHIP ALONGSIDE.

PASSENGERS ARE CARRIED BY A FAST-MOVING LIFT UP THE SLENDER TUBE OF STEEL WHICH FORMS THE TOWER, AND ON REACHING THE AERIAL PLATFORM ENTER THE AIRSHIP THROUGH A COVERED PASSAGE-WAY LIKE THAT OF A CORRIDOR TRAIN.

or towers, are extraordinarily interesting; and one may note that the Air Ministry now proposes to put an improved one up for testing at the station at Howden.

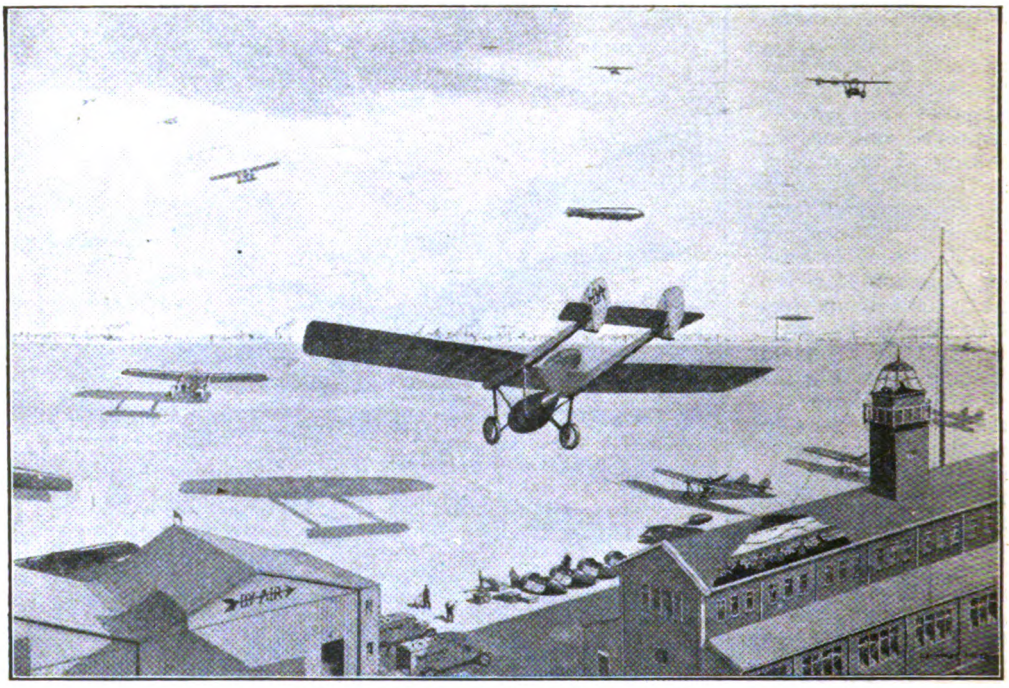
Let us assume for a moment that we are aerial passengers leaving London for the forty-eight hours' airship flight to New York which should become possible as soon as we have the really large airship which will fly at great speed. Arriving at the air-station, we find ourselves in a glass-roofed vestibule. Then, passing into an inner hall, we step into a lift and are borne in this swiftly up through the centre of an immensely tall, slender tower of steel until we reach a small, covered-in chamber. Here, leaving the lift and going up a short flight of steps, we emerge on a platform which is at the very head of the mast or column up which the lift has carried us. There is no fear of one's feeling dizzy, in spite of the height, because the platform is entirely walled and roofed, and there is nothing to tell us we are now in a sort of crow's-nest, with the earth a very long way below.

ELECTRIFIED AIRWAYS.

THE CONTROL OF WIRELESS WAVES BRINGS US A STAGE NEARER AN ELECTRIFIED AIR SERVICE, IN WHICH THE AEROPLANES ARE FITTED WITH A MOTOR WHICH PICKS UP CURRENT OUT OF THE AIR, THE POWER REQUIRED BEING RADIATED UPWARD BY A SERIES OF TOWERS ALONG THE ROUTE.

At the top of the tower, floating quite freely in the air, and with her bow attached by a special coupling to the chamber in which we stand, is the ocean-going airship. In order to take up this position she has flown near the tower and dropped a rope, to which has been attached a flexible steel cable which is connected to an electric winch within the tower. Then, the cable being wound in, she has been "berthed" snugly. Here she rides securely—the whole platform revolving so that she is always head to wind—even should a gale arise. Even in winds blowing at the velocity of seventy or eighty miles an hour an airship thus berthed will ride quite safely.

Now we embark. Between the bow of the airship and the platform of the elevated air-station is a covered, flexible passage-way, rather like those one is accustomed to pass through when going from one coach to another of a corridor train. Through this we walk quite unperturbed, with no unpleasant suggestion at all of being high above the ground; and, once inside the big air liner, we feel just as secure



PILOTLESS CARGO-PLANES.

AN ASTONISHING POSSIBILITY OF THE FUTURE IS THAT A LARGE CARGO-AEROPLANE, WITHOUT A CREW, MAY BE ABLE TO ASCEND FROM LONDON, FLY BY ELECTRICAL PROPULSION AND CONTROL ALONG THE AERIAL WAY TO PARIS, AND GLIDE SAFELY TO ITS LANDING-POINT JUST AS THOUGH A PILOT HAD BEEN IN CONTROL. TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS MAY BE SEEN IN THE BUILDING IN THE FOREGROUND.

as if we had entered some ocean-going steamship.

With her mails as well as passengers aboard, the airship "casts off" from her tower and drifts away on the wind. Then, starting her engines at a signal from the control car, she will swing off on her four thousand miles' flight. And in these great ocean-going airships we shall travel with a comfort, or rather a luxury, which we have never known before. Cabins, lounges, beautiful upper-deck saloons—the trans-ocean airship will have all these; and when winds are high, and the surface of the sea below is rising in tempestuous waves, the airship traveller will look down quite unconcerned. His vessel will ride with perfect steadiness, and sickness will be a thing of the past.

There is a wonder of air travel looming now on the horizon which, should it materialize, will revolutionize the operation of aerial routes and lead us perhaps into an electrical as well as an air age which may develop in a way that will bring results almost incredible.

It is a thought which has long been in the minds of inventors. Hitherto, though, it has been more or less a dream. The idea is to use electricity, instead of petrol engines, to drive aeroplanes along an organized flying route. One drawback, so far, has been to concentrate the electrical energy upward in a prescribed beam, and to prevent it from dissipating itself in all directions. Recent experiments in wireless telephony suggest, however, that it may be possible to electrify an international flying route with a ray of wireless current which will be so controlled, as it is projected upward by ground stations, that it is focused in a regular and constant beam, being picked up out of the air by the specially-devised motors of planes which fly along this lane of traffic. This will mean that an aeroplane will be installed merely with a lightened electric motor capable of being energized by the wireless waves. There will be no need, as at present, to lift into the air the dead weight of many gallons of fuel, and the space and weight thus saved will be devoted to profit-earning cargo.

A possibility even more astonishing, which seems at a first glance positively uncanny, is the flying along these electrified airways of planes without pilots or any human being in them.

It has been shown possible, already, to control the movements of an aeroplane,

Thus, Sigurdsson Saga, the author, elaborates
in several short stanzas.

1	S				S			
2	A	r r		W	A			
3	I				I			
4	N	o v i	c	E	N			
5	T				T			
6	V	e	i	L	L	A	A	V
7	A				A	U	B	A
8	L				U	X	R	L
9	E		r	R	R	E	A	E
10	N	a u g h o t h i n		G	E	N	H	N
11	T	emulating respas		S	N	T	A	T
12	I				C	I	M	I
13	N				U	U	E	N
14	E					S	S	E

f t
l h
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while it is flying, by wireless impulses directed up from the ground. It was, in fact, suggested, towards the end of the war, that bomb-dropping might be carried out in this way, and that aeroplanes carrying torpedoes might be launched against ships and directed towards their target by distant controlling stations. But the difficulty was that the operator at the wireless station could control the pilotless aeroplane only as long as it was in sight, which restricted very greatly the range in war. But detailed improvements in wireless telegraphy are calling attention to the fact that it may not only be found possible to send a small aircraft up into the air without a pilot and guide it by wireless as long as it is in sight, but it may even become feasible to go on controlling it by the new power of directional wireless even when it is beyond human vision. The pilotless plane may, that is to say, be so equipped that it will send out automatically, every few seconds, a signal which is received by the stations controlling it, and which will enable them, by the impulses which they originate and transmit, to steer it on a predetermined course should its tendency have been to veer away from it.

On an international airway, with electrical stations as close together as desired, the question of wireless control might be solved quite easily. Each station would control a plane within limits of vision, and would then surrender it to the sphere of the next station, and so on.

Thus it may be possible, ultimately, to cause a large cargo aeroplane without a crew to ascend from London, fly by electrical propulsion and control along the aerial way to Paris, and glide safely to its landing point just as though a pilot had been sitting at its controls. And the ability to dispense with a crew would, of course, provide more lifting power and space for mails and goods.

WHAT can one say of such marvels save that the ceaseless ingenuity of man's brain, coupled with the wonders he now controls in scientific instruments and machinery, may lead us into a world in which we annihilate the old restrictions of time and distance, and live a life of such activity and interest that, looking back, we shall hardly seem to have lived at all to-day?

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 92.

On either hand the uprights we may see.
What fitter place for uprights could there be?

1. A thankless task—if task it be—unless
One loves to eat the bread of idleness.

2. See headless, tailless see: within we find
Something that wild retailing bring to mind.

3. Thing Scandinavian; and, with added head,
An English thing of mark is seen instead.

4. Who writes to maiden should a letter change,
As it is startling, more than passing strange.

5. Let famous couple now their river miss,
One will become a plant, the other this.

6. Where quadruped and river are the same,
She will be noticed, she without a name.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 92 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on March 11th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 91.

1.	S	inger	S
2.	A	rro	W
3.	I	gnit	E
4.	N	ovic	E
5.	T	oile	T
6.	V	eilet	H
7.	A	fir	E
8.	L	av	A
9.	E	r	R
10.	N	ough	T
11.	T	respas	S
12.	I	solate	D
13.	N	aphth	A
14.	E	nerg	Y

NOTES.—Light 1. William Morris. 9. *Humanum est errare.* 13. Oil spring.

The "Malta" light in No. 89 proved unexpectedly difficult. Several solvers overlooked the fact that the island is in view, buried in the words "formal take."

Mr. Cray's Adventures

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

No. 5
THE RIFT

Illustrated by S. ABBEY

MR. CRAY, newly arrived from Paris, sat in the lounge of the Milan, talking to his daughter, Lady Sittingbourne.

The latter was a little distressed.

"I am worried about George, dad," she confided. "When did you say the *Mauretania* arrived?"

"Docked in Liverpool midday yesterday," Mr. Cray replied. "The special arrived in London last night."

"George cabled me from New York that he was sailing on her," Sara continued, "and I have heard nothing since. I sat at home all last night, and all to-day up till four o'clock. Then I telephoned the Cunard Steamship Company and they told me that he was on board. They knew nothing else, of course."

Mr. Cray admitted to being a little perplexed himself. "I suppose he'd have to go to Downing Street first," he observed.

"I thought I'd allowed plenty of time for that. Why, dad——"

Mr. Cray was leaning forward in his chair. He, too, was staring in some bewilderment at the tall, good-looking man who had just descended the steps and, with a companion by his side, was making his way towards the restaurant. There was not the slightest doubt that the man was Sir George Sittingbourne, or that his companion was an extremely good-looking woman of somewhat flamboyant type.

"George!" Sara exclaimed, breathlessly. "What on earth does this mean?"

She rose impulsively to her feet. Her husband turned and glanced in their direction. He took not the slightest notice either of his wife or his father-in-law. The woman by his side plucked at his arm to ask him a question, and he smiled into her face as he leaned down.

"Gee!" Mr. Cray murmured. "This is bad!"

"It's disgraceful—horrible!" Sara cried. "So this is why George hasn't been home!"

Mr. Cray pulled himself together.

"George isn't that sort, my dear," he declared. "There's something queer about it. Let's sit and think for a moment."

"I shall do nothing of the sort," Sara insisted. "I shall go straight in and confront him. I will let him know that I saw him with my own eyes."

"If your ladyship will excuse me!"

Both Mr. Cray and his daughter looked round. Standing behind their settee was a small, dark man of unobtrusive manners, dressed in an unobtrusive dinner suit, and with a faintly deprecating smile upon his lips.

"I regret so much," he went on, "being compelled to make my little explanation here. I called in Curzon Street, but found that your ladyship had just left. I wish to have a word with you in reference to your husband."

"My husband?" Sara repeated, blankly. "Who are you?"

"My name is King," the young man replied. "I am connected with the Intelligence Department."

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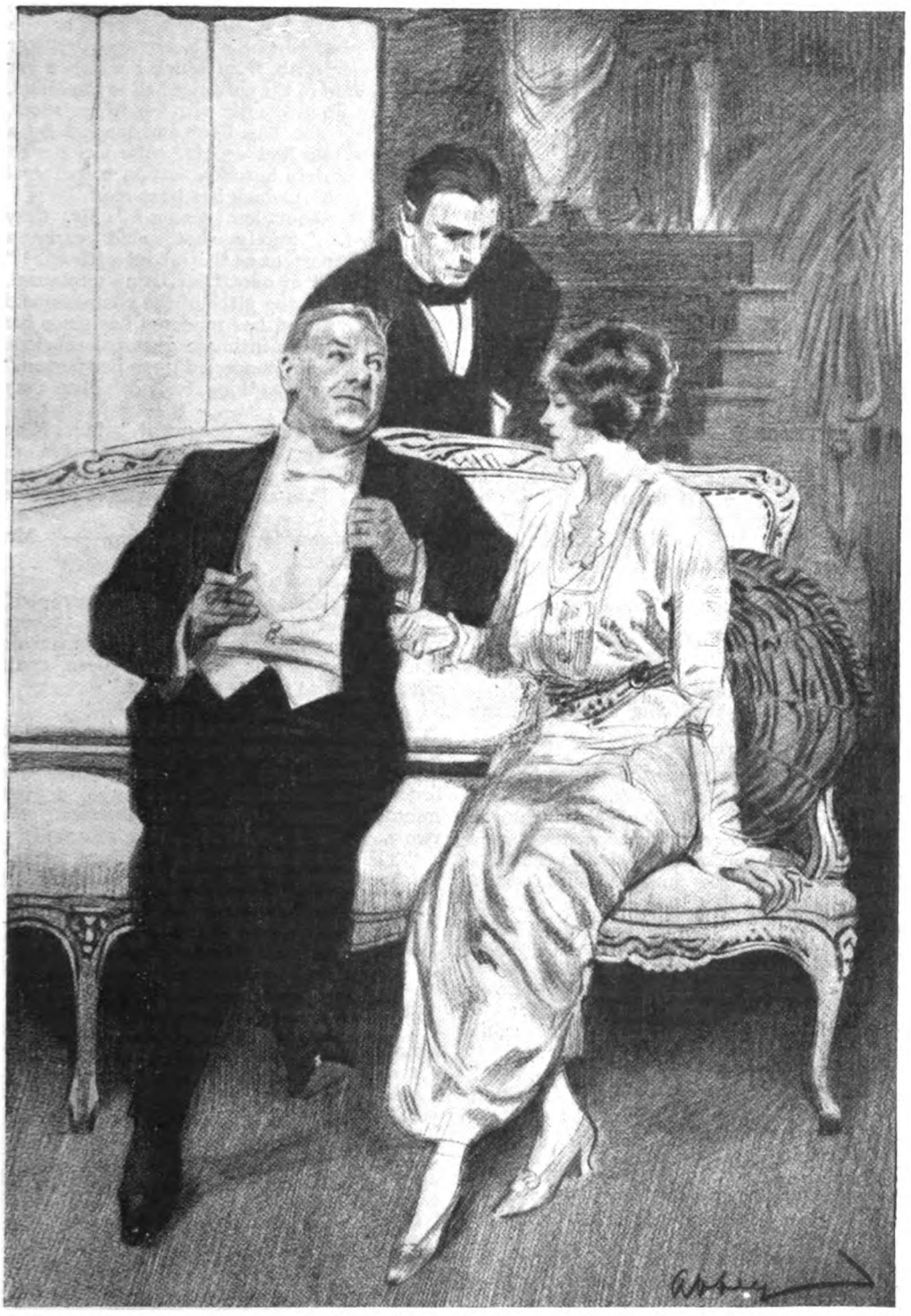

"'If your ladyship will excuse me!'——both Mr. Cray and his daughter looked round——'I wish to have a word with you in reference to your husband.'"

Neither Sara nor her father felt capable of any comment. The situation so suddenly disclosed had taken their breath away.

"Your husband," Mr. King continued, smoothly, "after a very successful visit to the States, has met with one of those misadventures on his homeward journey to which we are all of us sometimes subject. An autograph letter which he was conveying from a certain person in Washington to the Prime Minister, and to obtain which was the object of his mission, was stolen from his person during the last day of his voyage home."

"What has that to do with my husband's presence here with that—that woman?" Sara demanded.

"Sir George sought the aid of my department by wireless," Mr. King replied. "I boarded the steamer in the Mersey and at once realized the probable thief. The woman whom he is dining with to-night sat at his table and occupied the next stateroom to his. She is an Austrian. It will be sufficient if I tell you that if she had been found in any of the allied countries during the war she would have been shot at once as a spy."

"What is her name?" Sara demanded, a little irrelevantly.

"She has many," Mr. King answered. "She calls herself at present Mrs. Jacob Weiller, from Chicago."

"And why is she dining alone with my husband?"

Mr. King smiled inscrutably.

"Even the most successful Secret Service agents in the world," he said, "have their weak point. Mrs. Weiller, although she must be forty years old, preserves a romantic disposition. From my inquiries on the ship, I learned that she has pursued your husband with attentions from the day the steamer left Sandy Hook, attentions which I might add were obviously undesired. It was my advice at once that your husband should not lose sight of the lady. I may tell you that while he engages her attention at dinner, her rooms are being thoroughly searched by our agents."

"Say, this affair becomes interesting!" Mr. Cray declared, his natural instincts asserting themselves. "I guess you are satisfied now, Sara?"

"I suppose so," she admitted, with a shade of doubt still in her tone.

"Then let's just have a word or two more about this matter," Mr. Cray went on. "Searching the lady's rooms is all very well, but can't she have sent the letter away somewhere?"

"It is impossible that she should have parted with it," Mr. King pronounced. "I myself left the steamer by her side. I travelled in the same compartment from Liverpool; I did not move a yard away from her on Euston platform. Sir George escorted her here in a taxicab, from which I watched her myself alight in the entrance hall of the Milan, and went up in the lift with her to her room. Since then she has been surrounded by a cordon of our best agents. She has posted three absolutely harmless letters to personal friends, each of which has been read."

"What about her person?" Mr. Cray demanded. "Surely she would carry a letter as important as that about with her?"

"An agent of ours," Mr. King explained, "at once took the place of the chambermaid on her floor, and has rendered her since her arrival the most intimate personal services. The letter is not concealed upon her person."

"How large a thing is it?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"It is a bulky document," Mr. King replied. "There are eighteen pages of ordinary letter paper enclosed in a long envelope. It is altogether a packet of some bulk."

"The stewardess on the ship——" Mr. Cray began.

Mr. King smiled.

"We make our mistakes," he interrupted, "but in our way we are thorough. Every person with whom she came in contact during the last day of her voyage has been dealt with. Excuse me for a moment."

MR. KING sauntered across the foyer to where a recently-arrived prototype of himself had lit a cigarette and was ordering a cocktail. There was a few minutes' casual conversation between the two men, after which Mr. King returned.

"The search of Blanche Weiller's room," he announced, "has revealed nothing. I think, in the circumstances, Lady Sittingbourne, disappointing though it may be to you, the best thing you can do is to return home. We will send your husband after you as soon as we can spare him."

Sara made a little grimace.

"I don't see what good he can do if your agents have failed to discover the document," she observed, rising reluctantly to her feet, "and in any case I haven't had any dinner yet."

Mr. Cray took his daughter by the arm.

"We'll go straight into the Grill Room and have a bite, Sara. Afterwards, if I could have a word with you, Mr. King, I'd be glad," he went on. "I am naturally interested in this affair, and it is just possible that I might be of some slight assistance."

King looked a little doubtful. Mr. Cray pushed back his coat, revealing a small medal attached to his waistcoat. The other's manner altered at once.

"For services rendered the American Intelligence Department," Mr. Cray explained. "I'll look for you about here, eh, in three-quarters of an hour?"

"I shall be very glad of your help, sir," was the quiet reply.

THE dinner in the Grill Room was rather a dull meal. Sara was several times on the verge of tears, and her father, although fully sympathetic, was inclined at times to let his attention wander a little.

"It seems positively hateful," the former declared, "to think that I should be up here dining alone with you, and George, who has been away from me for months, is in the restaurant, dining with another woman! Of course, I am sorry that the letter was stolen from him, but I'm sure he took every care of it. I don't see what he can possibly do now towards getting it back."

"It's hard luck," Mr. Cray murmured, soothingly, "but I guess you've got to remember this, Sara. In diplomacy and all Intelligence business, judgment goes only by results. George was entrusted with that letter and he allowed it to be stolen from him. The fault might not have been his. On the other hand, if he doesn't get it back again the black mark's there."

"I call it unfair," Sara protested. "He was so successful with all the rest of his business. They ought to take that into account."

"We'll soon fix that up all right," Mr. Cray promised.

Sara sighed.

"I know how clever you are, dad," she said, "but I really don't see what you can do here."

"What I should like to do," Mr. Cray remarked, thoughtfully, "is to turn a slight disaster into an absolute triumph. Blanche Weiller, eh? Well, well! The wife of Jacob N. Weiller of Chicago, eh?"

"Do you know something about her, dad? Have you ever seen her before?" Sara inquired.

Mr. Cray smiled mysteriously.

"I think I know as much about the lady as our friend, Mr. King," he said. "I was at Amiens when she was in charge of a French field hospital. She was asked to leave, the day after she arrived—no excuse—not a word of explanation—just her railway pass to Paris, and a hint. She simply faded away. I knew her before that, though. I remember when she had what they call a *salon* in Washington, some seven years ago."

"You really are rather a wonderful person," Sara observed.

"Nothing wonderful about it," Mr. Cray replied, modestly. "I have a good memory, and I never forget a face."

Sara sighed as her father paid the bill.

"Well, I suppose I'd better go home," she said. "Will you put me in a taxi, dad, and let me know as soon as there's any news?"

"Sure!" Mr. Cray promised. "I'll telephone."

MR. CRAY found his new friend studying the tape in the upper hall.

"Say, I'd like to be presented to this Mrs. Weiller," the former said, after they had stood side by side for several moments, both apparently deeply interested by the news.

Mr. King shook his head.

"I am keeping under cover," he replied.

"Sha'n't be butting in," Mr. Cray asked, "if I find my own way there?"

Mr. King considered the point for a moment.

"Not at all," he decided. "You're Sir George's father-in-law. Quite natural for you to speak to him."

Whereupon Mr. Cray descended into the foyer, and after glancing around for a moment as though in search of someone, approached Sir George. His right hand was held out in cordial recognition to Mrs. Weiller. She looked up at him pleasantly, but evidently puzzled.

"George, my boy, glad to see you safely back again," Mr. Cray said. "And—surely I'm not mistaken—aren't you Mrs. Jacob N. Weiller, of Chicago?"

"That is my name," the lady admitted, "but——"

"Why, my dear lady," Mr. Cray interrupted, "your husband and I were at school together, same class at Princetown, and before his marriage we roomed together in New York. Kinder shame I only met you once—out at the Country Club—the Shore Country Club, you know. Luke Hamer was there, and all the crowd."

"Of course, I remember," the lady acknowledged, with a sweet smile.

"Is Jacob along?" Mr. Cray asked, eagerly.

"Not this time."

Mr. Cray remained for a few more minutes chatting on general subjects. Then he took a somewhat hurried departure, recognizing an acquaintance in a distant part of the foyer.

"A dear, friendly person," Mrs. Weiller murmured, toying with one of the stones of her long amber necklace. "To tell you the truth, though, I don't remember him in the least."

Mr. Cray touched King on the arm as he passed him in the upper hall, and led him into the bar. He ordered two Scotch

whiskies and sodas and shook his head gravely at his companion.

"Say, Mr. King," he began, "I don't want to seem to be rubbing it in, but you fellows ain't all that smart. You can reckon on handling that letter any time you choose."

Mr. King started a little. His eyes narrowed. He looked at his companion appraisingly. He could not make up his mind whether this was a bluff or whether there was something underneath.

"Where is the letter, then?" he asked.

Mr. Cray smiled.

"I've had a few words with the lady," he went on, thoughtfully. "I talked to her of her husband who never existed, and of a meeting which never took place. She fell to it admirably, and while we talked I looked for that letter. It wasn't so difficult to locate, either."

"Look here," Mr. King said, "that letter consists of eighteen sheets of rather thick notepaper, secured in a long, legal envelope. It must weigh at least six ounces. Now, one of our own women attended Mrs. Weiller from the moment she stepped out of the bath, helped her on with her garments, and never left her for a single second. From the moment she left the room she was shadowed by one of our men, and I took the business up at the bottom of the lift. Now how can you make out that she has a packet of that description concealed upon her person?"

"Dead easy," Mr. Cray replied. "The only question is, do you want to help yourself to the letter at once, or—— ?"

"Or what?"

"Do you want to find out whose game she's playing? In other words, do you want to find out who's paying her to get that letter?"

Mr. King drew a little breath. He was beginning to be impressed.

"There isn't much doubt about that, I fancy, Mr. Cray," he said.

"Think not?"

"Why, the woman's an Austrian by birth," Mr. King pointed out. "She was under suspicion many times during the war. We had evidence only the other day," he continued, dropping his voice a little, "of the renewed activities of the German Secret Service. This woman is directly connected with one of the new chiefs."

"Ah!" Mr. Cray murmured.

"I am treating you with every confidence, you see," his companion proceeded. "It would naturally be of the utmost importance to Germany to know exactly how America stands with reference to the ratification of the Treaty. The matter is urgent, too. I have been expecting her to make some attempt to dispose of her information, this evening. That is why we are here in such force. That is why we want to keep Sir George by her side as long as we can."

"The game seems clear enough, certainly," Mr. Cray observed.

"Now tell me where that letter is?" Mr. King asked, eagerly.

Mr. Cray knocked the ash from his cigar.

"That wouldn't do any good," he declared. "When I say that I know where the letter is, you can figure it out that I'm making a pretty strong guess. If I tell you and I'm wrong, you may lighten up on the job and let the blamed thing go through. You keep her in the net until she attempts to leave the hotel or send a parcel away. We'll have her both ways then. We'll find the letter and we'll find out the agent with whom she is dealing."

"I think I can lay my hands on him," Mr. King observed, calmly. "We're watching him, too, just as closely as we are the woman. If anything passes between those two without being detected—well, I'll resign my post to-morrow."

"Capital!" Mr. Cray murmured, approvingly. "Well, I guess I'll turn in. I like my eight hours when I can get 'em."

"You're not going to tell me where the letter is, then?" Mr. King asked.

"Do you believe I know where it is?" Mr. Cray answered.

His companion smiled.

"To tell you the truth," he admitted, "I don't."

"Then I sha'n't disappoint you if we let things stay as they are until to-morrow," Mr. Cray decided.

MR. CRAY found his son-in-law waiting for him in his rooms. Sir George was standing on the hearthrug with his hands in his pockets, whistling moodily.

"Where's Sara?" he asked, eagerly.

"Gone home an hour ago. We had a bite together in the Grill Room."

"She understood, I hope?"

"More or less," Mr. Cray assured him. "You know what these women are. She may make a bit of a fuss for the sake of making it up afterwards. Are you off duty now?"

Sir George nodded.

"I've done the best I can," he confessed. "The woman's too clever for me. If she's really got the letter, she must have swallowed it."

"Did you suspect her at all during the voyage?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"I suspected everybody," his son-in-law replied. "I made no friends. I didn't speak a dozen words to anybody—until that last day. I had some coffee in the smoking-room which made me feel drowsy, and afterwards I dozed in my steamer chair. When

" Mr. Cray's right hand was held out in cordial recognition to Mrs. Weiller. She looked up at him pleasantly, but evidently puzzled."

I woke up, she was in the next chair to mine and the packet had gone from the inner pocket of my coat, where it was sewn in. All the stitches had been cut."

" You didn't feel like having her arrested and searched ? " Mr. Cray asked, thoughtfully.

" That was my first thought," Sir George confessed. " Then I looked at my watch and saw that I'd been asleep for an hour, so

she'd had plenty of time to hide it. I sent the wireless to King, but otherwise I pretended not to have discovered the theft."

"And you can't make anything of her?" Mr. Cray queried.

"Nothing at all," Sir George replied. "I've given the job up and I'm going home. The rest of my mission," he went on, "was completely successful, and I am not the first man in the Intelligence Department who has been robbed. I saw you talking to King," he continued. "Have you any theories?"

"Sure!" Mr. Cray assented, cheerfully. "We'll get that letter back all right, and before any mischief's been done. Not only that, but we'll carry the war into the enemy's camp. We'll find out for whom she was working."

Sir George looked at his father-in-law with something of that wondering admiration which he had more than once in his lifetime felt for him.

"Are you in earnest?" he asked, breathlessly.

"Sure thing," Mr. Cray replied. "I'll lay ten to one I could put my hand on the letter to-night. You get home to Sara now. By the by, are you seeing Mrs. Weiller again?"

"I promised to lunch to-morrow," Sir George replied, moodily. "I don't see that there's any use in it, and I'm a clumsy hand at this sort of flirtation."

"Good boy," Mr. Cray murmured, approvingly. "Get along with you now, then. I'll telephone Sara that you're coming."

Whereupon Sir George departed and his father-in-law went to bed.

AT eleven o'clock the next morning there was a slight stir amongst the silent army of watchers who were gathered around the purlieus of the Milan Hotel. Messages came from upstairs, and, somewhat to Mr. Cray's surprise, Mrs. Weiller descended from the lift, talked for a moment with one of the reception clerks, and, passing through the swing doors, asked for a taxi. She was on the point of driving off when King sauntered across to where Mr. Cray had risen from his seat in some perturbation.

"It's all right," the former announced, smoothly. "She was dressed again by our woman, who also packed that wooden box she is carrying with her."

"What's in the wooden box?" Mr. Cray asked.

"Only the amber necklace she was wearing last night. Something wrong with the clasp. She is taking it to the Goldsmith's and Silversmith's."

"Anyone following her?" Mr. Cray, who was half-way towards the door, demanded.

King shook his head.

"She hasn't got the letter with her," he replied. "We don't want to make her suspicious if we can help it. Here—where are you off to?"

Mr. Cray had already accosted a taxicab driver waiting in the courtyard. He whispered a word or two to the man and jumped in.

"Come along, if you want to be in at the death," he invited King.

The latter obeyed with a little protest.

"I don't see what's the use of following her," he declared. "We know where she's gone."

"Gee, but you're dead off it this time!" Mr. Cray remarked, pityingly. "Bet you a dime she doesn't go near the Goldsmith's and Silversmith's, and I bet you another dime she's got the letter with her."

King was dubious, but his companion's confidence somewhat perturbed him.

"Mr. Cray," he said, "couldn't you be a little more explicit?"

"Well, I'll show you one thing, at any rate," was the calm reply. "There's Mrs. Weiller's taxi ahead of us, and, as you observe, we're in Piccadilly, not Regent Street."

"That's so," King observed, uneasily.

"Don't bother me for explanations for a moment," Mr. Cray advised. "I want to keep my eye on that taxi. Yes, I thought so!"

They turned into a well-known thoroughfare, and stopped at a comparatively small jeweller's about half-way down. The traffic was somewhat blocked, and she had entered the shop while they were still some distance behind. Mr. Cray half-rose in his seat. He was a little uneasy.

"Say, has she spotted you yet?" he asked his companion.

King shook his head.

"No, I've been in the background all the time."

"Follow me into the shop, then," Cray directed. "You can ask for something or other. We can't afford to hang about."

Mr. Cray stepped on to the pavement, crossed it with incredible swiftness, and entered the shop. Mrs. Weiller was the only customer present. Before her on the counter was stretched her amber necklace, just drawn from the box. The shopman appeared to be examining the catch. Mr. Cray passed on to the farther end of the shop, but suddenly seemed to recognize Mrs. Weiller and came towards her cheerfully.

"Say, you've soon begun to set the Chicago dollars spinning, Mrs. Weiller!" he said, with a broad smile. "How are you feeling after the trip, eh?"

Mrs. Weiller was not enthusiastic in her response.

"I am very well indeed, thank you, Mr. Cray," she said. "As a matter of fact, I am not here to buy anything at all. I was just having the catch of my amber necklace examined. I have rather a quaint fancy for this sort of thing," she added, touching the beads carelessly.

The jeweller, who had been examining the catch through a magnifying glass, made his report just as Cray inquired of his assistant for some plain gold safety-pins. King, too, entered at that moment and waited at the farther end of the place.

"The catch, madam," the jeweller announced, "is in perfect order, and will stand any reasonable strain. If, as you suggest, it slipped, it must have been imperfectly fastened. If you take care to drive it home, so," he added, "you will never have any difficulty."

Mrs. Weiller smiled and picked up her gold bag. She bought some trifle of jewellery while Cray was selecting his safety-pins.

"Can I send the necklace anywhere for you, madam?" the man asked.

"If you wouldn't mind, a gentleman will call for it in about half an hour," she answered. "I am going shopping and it is really quite bulky to carry about."

"Certainly, madam," the man assented. "What name will it be?"

"Mr. Gerald Thornassen."

Mrs. Weiller received the change from her purchase, and looked around as though to nod to Mr. Cray, but found him absorbed in the examination of some waistcoat buttons. She left the shop and passed out into the street. King for the first time spoke.

"'Say, you've soon begun to set the Chicago dollars spinning, Mrs. Weiller!' Mr. Cray said."

"You are letting her go?"

Mr. Cray smiled.

"The letter is here," he said.

A little exclamation broke from King's lips. Mr. Cray moved down to where the jeweller was packing up the necklace.

"May I be allowed to have a look at that?" he asked. "Very fine amber, isn't it?"

"The necklace does not belong to us," the jeweller replied, proceeding with his task. "We cannot allow clients' property to be examined."

Mr. Cray turned towards his companion, and King leaned against the counter. He whispered a word or two to the jeweller, who went suddenly pale.

"I—I really don't understand," he stammered.

"Don't try," was the brusque reply. "I

have told you who I am. If you doubt my word, you can ring up the Department or call in the two plain-clothes officers who are outside by this time. Here is my warrant."

Mr. King drew a small gold medal from his pocket. The jeweller bowed.

"I am quite satisfied, sir," he said. "Pray proceed as you think fit."

Mr. Cray took up the necklace in his hands and felt each of the stones. A beatific smile parted his lips.

"It is as I supposed," he murmured. "See here."

He pressed a hidden catch amongst the links and one of the stones flew open upon a concealed hinge. There was a small hollow space about an inch long and half an inch deep. In it was folded a wad of paper.

"The letter," Mr. Cray observed, "has been cut into symmetrical pieces, each one numbered, and can, of course, be easily put together."

King nodded apprehendingly.

"We will examine it more carefully in a few minutes," he said. "In the meantime," he added, "place the nearest necklace you have to it in this box, tie it up, and address it to Gerald Thornassen, Esq. The other necklace I will take care of."

"You are aware that this is a great financial responsibility, sir?" the jeweller observed, nervously.

"My Department will secure you from any loss," King assured him, with a slight smile. "Better hurry. This man may be here at any moment."

The jeweller obeyed orders. Cray and his companion postponed the examination of Mrs. Weiller's necklace and entered into an exhaustive scrutiny of the whole stock of waistcoat buttons. In about twenty-five minutes the shop door was pushed open and a tall, dark man, wearing a single eyeglass, and fashionably attired, entered the place. King, with the celerity of a cat, disappeared behind a screen.

"I have called for a parcel for Mrs. Jacob Weiller," the man announced.

A package was handed to him and nonchalantly received.

"Anything to pay?"

"Nothing at all," the jeweller replied. "No repair was necessary."

The man left the shop. King glided out of his concealment. His eyes were bright with excitement.

"This is more interesting than I thought," he muttered. "Come along, Cray."

The jeweller leaned forward.

"If this is a criminal affair," he said, tremblingly, "I trust that you will see we are entirely innocent of complicity of any sort."

King scarcely glanced towards him.

"I shall make up my mind about that," he replied, "when I see whether Mr. Thornassen, as he calls himself, has been warned."

SIR GEORGE SITTINGBOURNE and his wife arrived at Mr. Cray's sitting-room at a few minutes before one. They found their prospective host with a gum-brush in his hand and a number of sheets of paper before him. He welcomed them triumphantly.

"George," he announced, "your letter, a little damaged, I am afraid, but there it is—quite readable, signature and all. It's taken me over an hour to piece it together."

"My dear man!" Sir George exclaimed, thankfully. "Where in God's name did you get it from?"

Mr. Cray smiled, opened a drawer, and threw a necklace upon the table.

"From Mrs. Weiller's amber necklace, of course."

"Dad," Sara murmured, throwing her arms round his neck, "you're wonderful!"

"Sir," Sir George exclaimed, in a voice choked with emotion, "you're a brick."

They were still lingering over their cocktails before descending to luncheon, when King was ushered in. He closed the door behind him. For such an unruffled person his appearance was almost remarkable. His eyes were bright, there was a look of concern in his face.

"You've pieced it together? Has it come out?" he asked.

"Absolutely," Mr. Cray replied. "You can read it for yourself—that is, if Sir George gives permission. What about Thornassen?"

King drew in a little breath. For a moment he made no reply.

"A German emissary, eh?" Mr. Cray asked.

King shook his head gravely. Already, in his agile brain, the great problems of the future were shaping themselves. He saw the new danger.

"Thornassen," he said, gravely, "deposited the sham necklace—at an embassy—which I must not name."

"An embassy?" Sir George exclaimed.

"The embassy of one of our Allies," King groaned. "May I assume that that last cocktail is for me, Mr. Cray? Your very good health. Will you allow me to express my acknowledgments, and to say that I am only sorry that that little symbol which you carry was not struck at our mint instead of at Washington."

Mr. Cray smiled benevolently.

"That needn't trouble you any, King," he said. "I guess we're all pulling in the same boat."

(Another of Mr. Cray's Adventures will appear next month.)

Without Prejudice

by

ETHEL M. DELL

ILLUSTRATED BY
W. R. S. STOTT

PART IV.

CHAPTER XI.

WITHOUT CONDITIONS.

IN the midst of a darkness that could be felt Fletcher Hill stood, grimly motionless, waiting. He knew that strong-room, had likened it to a condemned cell every time he had entered it, and with bitter humour he told himself that he had put his own neck into the noose with a vengeance this time.

Not often—if ever—before had he made the fatal mistake of trusting one who was untrustworthy. He would not have dreamed of trusting Harley, for instance. But for some reason he had chosen to repose his confidence in Warden, and now it seemed that he was to pay the price of his rashness. It was that fact that galled him far more than the danger with which he was confronted. That he, Fletcher Hill—the Bloodhound—ever wary and keen of scent, should have failed to detect a *ruse* so transparent—this inflicted a wound that his pride found it hard to sustain. Through his lack of caution he had forfeited his own freedom, if not his life, and exposed Dot to a risk from the thought of which even his iron nerve shrank. He told himself repeatedly, with almost fierce emphasis, that Dot would be safe, that Warden could not be such a hound as to fail her; but deep within him there lurked a doubt which he would have given all he had to be able to silence. The fact remained that through his negligence she had been left unprotected in an hour of great danger.

Within the narrow walls of his prison there was no sound save the occasional drip of water that oozed through the damp rock. He might have been penned in a vault, and the darkness that pressed upon him seemed to crush the senses, making difficult coherent thought. There was nothing to be done but to wait, and that waiting was the worst ordeal that Fletcher Hill had ever been called upon to face.

A long time passed—how long he had no means of gauging. He stood like a sentinel, weapon in hand, staring into the awful darkness, struggling against its oppression, fighting to keep his brain alert and ready for any emergency. He thought he was prepared for anything, but that time of waiting tried his endurance to the utmost, and when at length a sound other than that irregular drip of water came through the deathly stillness he started with a violence that sent a smile of self-contempt to his lips.

It was a wholly unexpected sound—just the ordinary tones of a man's voice speaking to him through the darkness where he had believed that there was nothing but a blank wall.

"Mr. Hill, where are you?" it said. "I have come to get you out."

Hill's hand tightened upon his revolver. He was not to be taken unawares a second time. He stood in absolute silence, waiting.

There was a brief pause, then again came the voice. "There's not much point in shooting me. You'll probably starve if you do. So watch out! I'm going to show a light."

Hill still stood without stirring a muscle. His back was to the door. He faced the direction of the voice.

Suddenly, like the glare from an explosion,

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a light flashed in his eyes, blinding him after the utter dark. He flinched from it in spite of himself, but the next moment he was his own master again, erect and stern, contemptuously unafraid.

"Don't shoot!" said Bill Warden, with a gleam of his teeth, "or maybe you'll shoot a friend!"

He was standing empty-handed save for the torch he carried, his great figure upright against the wall, facing Hill with speculation in his eyes.

Hill lowered his revolver. "I doubt it," he said, grimly.

"Ah! You don't know me yet, do you?" said Warden, a faintly jeering note in his voice.

"Yes," said Hill, deliberately. "I think I know you—pretty well—now."

"I wonder," said Warden.

He moved slowly forward, throwing the light before him as he did so. The place had been blasted out of the rock, and here and there the stone shone smooth as marble where the charge had gone. Rough shelves had been hewn in the walls, leaving divisions between, and on some of these were stored bags of the precious metal that had been ground out of the ore. There was no sign anywhere of any entrance save the iron-bound door behind Hill.

Straight in front of him Warden stopped. They stood face to face.

"Well?" Warden said. "What do you know of me?"

Hill's eyes were as steel. He stood stiff as a soldier on parade. He answered curtly, without a hint of emotion. "I know enough to get you arrested when this—farce—is over."

"Oh, you call this a farce, do you?" Bill Warden's words came slowly from lips that strangely smiled. "And when does—the fun begin?"

HILL'S harsh face was thrown into strong relief by the flare of the torch. It was as flint confronting the other man. "Do you really imagine that I regard this sort of Forty Thieves business seriously?" he said.

"I imagine it is pretty serious so far as you are concerned," said Warden. "You're in about the tightest hole you've ever been in in your life. And it's up to me to get you out—or to leave you. Do you understand that?"

"Oh, quite," said Fletcher Hill, sardonically. "But—let me tell you at the outset—you won't find me specially easy to bargain with on that count—Mr. Buckskin Bill."

Bill Warden threw up his head with a gesture of open defiance. "I'm not doing any—bargaining," he said. "And as to arresting me—afterwards—you can do as you please. But now—just now—you are in my power, and you're going to play my game. Got that?"

"I can see myself doing it," said Fletcher Hill.

"Yes, you will do it." A sudden deep note of savagery sounded in Warden's voice. "Not to save your own skin, Mr. Fletcher Hill, but for the sake of—something more valuable than that—something more precious even than your cussed pride. You'll do it for the sake of the girl you're going to marry. And you'll do it—now."

"Shall I?" said Fletcher Hill.

Bill Warden's hand suddenly came forth and gripped him by the shoulder. "Damn you!" he said. "Do you think I want to save your life?"

The words were low, spoken with a concentrated passion more terrible than open violence. He looked closely into Hill's eyes, and his own were flaming like the eyes of a baited animal.

Hill looked straight back at him without the stirring of an eyelid. "Take your hand off me!" he said.

It was the word of the superior officer. Warden's hand fell as it were mechanically. There followed a tense silence.

Then, again briefly, authoritatively, Hill spoke. "What is the position? The men are in revolt?"

"Yes." Almost involuntarily Warden's answer came. He looked at the elder man with a deference that was wholly instinctive, his own fierce rebellion quelled in spite of him. "They are out to shoot you, and—so far—they think I'm with them. I've let them think so. I can't hold them any other way."

"Go on!" commanded Fletcher Hill.

"I can only get you out of this place as my prisoner." Warden spoke as one compelled. "If you will submit to that, you will be comparatively safe. If not—I can do nothing."

"As your prisoner!" Deliberately Hill uttered the words; his eyes never left Warden's face. "Put myself in your hands without reservation, do you mean?"

"Yes, exactly that. It's your only chance." The flame in Warden's eyes had died down to a smoulder, but the tension of his attitude remained. He looked strung up for instant action. "You may not think me specially trustworthy," he said, after a moment. "But, after all, you've everything to lose if you don't. If I'd meant murder, I could have killed you easily when you first came along that passage."

"Yes, I've thought of that," said Hill, dryly. "But it wouldn't have suited your

purpose just then, I take it. That was merely—a demonstration——"

Warden made a sharp movement. "I did it to save your life," he said. "You'd have died like a dog within ten seconds if I hadn't turned you back."

A curious expression crossed Hill's strong countenance. It was almost a smile of understanding. "I am—indebted to you—boss," he said, and with the words very calmly he took his revolver by the muzzle and held it out. "I surrender to you—without conditions."

Bill Warden gave a sharp start of surprise. For an instant he hesitated, then in silence he took the weapon and dropped it into his pocket. A moment longer he looked Fletcher Hill straight in the eyes, then swung upon his heel.

"We'll get out of this infernal hole straight away," he said, and, stooping, gripped his fingers upon a ridge of stone that ran close to the floor. The stone swung inward under his grasp, leaving a dark aperture gaping at his feet. Bill glanced backwards at his prisoner.

The smile still hovered in the latter's eyes. "After you, Mr. Buckskin Bill!" he said, ceremoniously.

And in silence Bill led the way.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BOSS OF BARREN VALLEY.

"OH, my dear!" gasped Adela. "I've had the most terrifying adventure. I thought I should never see you again. The men are all on strike, and they've sworn to kill Fletcher Hill, only no one knows where he is. What became of him? Has he got away?"

"I don t know," Dot said.

She sank into the nearest chair in the ill-lighted manager's office, and leaned her white face in her hand.

"Perhaps he has been murdered already," said Adela. "Mr. Harley is very anxious about him. He can't hold them. And—Dot—just think of it!—Warden—the man we saw yesterday, the sub-manager—is at their head. I saw him myself. He had a revolver in his hand. You were with Fletcher Hill. You must know what became of him!"

"No, I don't know," said Dot. "We—parted—a long time ago."

"How odd you are!" said Adela. "Why, what is the matter? Are you going to faint?" She went to the girl and bent over her, frightened by her look. "What is the matter, Dot? What has happened to you? You haven't been hurt?"

"I am—all right," Dot said, with an effort. "Did Mr. Harley bring you here?"

"Yes. And you? How did you get here?"

"He—brought me most of the way—Mr. Warden," Dot said. "He has gone now to save—Fletcher Hill."

"To shoot him, more likely," said Adela. "He has posted sentinels all round the mine to catch him. I wonder if we are safe here! Mr. Harley said it was a safe place. But I wonder. Shall we make a bolt for it, Dot? Shall we? Shall we?"

"I shall stay here," Dot answered.

Adela was not even listening. "We are only two defenceless women, and there isn't a man to look after us. What shall we do if—— Ah! Heavens! What is that?"

A fearful sound had cut short her speculations—a fiendish yelling as of a pack of wolves leaping upon their prey. Dot sat up swiftly. Adela cowered in a corner.

The terrible noise continued, appalling in its violence. It swept like a wave towards the building, drowning the roar of the stream below. The girl at the table rose and went to the closed door. She gripped a revolver in her right hand. With her left she reached for the latch.

"Don't open it!" gasped Adela.

But Dot paid no heed. She lifted the latch and flung wide the door. Her slim figure stood outlined against the lamplight behind her. Before her in a white glare of moonlight lay the vault-like entrance of the mine at the head of Barren Valley, and surging along the black, scarred side of the hill there came a yelling crowd of miners. They were making straight for the open door, but at sight of the girl standing there they checked momentarily and the shouting died down.

SHE faced the foremost of them without a tremor. "What is it?" she demanded, in a clear, ringing voice. "What are you wanting?"

A man with the shaggy face of a baboon answered her. "You've got that blasted policeman in there. You stick up that gun of yours and let us pass! We've got guns of our own, so that won't help."

She confronted him with scorn. "Do you imagine I'm afraid of you and your guns? There's no one here except another woman. Are you out to fight women to-night?"

"That's a lie!" he made prompt response. "You've got Fletcher Hill in there, or I'm a nigger. You let us pass!"

But still she blocked the way, her revolver pointing straight at him. "Fletcher Hill is not here. And you won't come in unless Mr. Warden says so. He is not here either at present. But he is coming. And I will

shoot any man who tries to force his way in first."

"Damnation!" growled the shaggy-faced one and wheeled upon his comrades. "What do you say to that, boys? Going to let a woman run this show?"

A chorus of curses answered him, but still no one raised a revolver against the slender figure that opposed them. Only, after a moment, a cur in the background picked up a stone and flung it. It struck the doorpost, narrowly missing her shoulder. Dot did not flinch, but immediately, with tightened lips, she raised the revolver and fired over their heads.

A furious outburst followed the explosion, and in an instant a dozen revolvers were levelled at her. But in that same instant there came a sound like the roar of a lion from behind the building, and with it Warden's great figure leapt out into the moonlight.

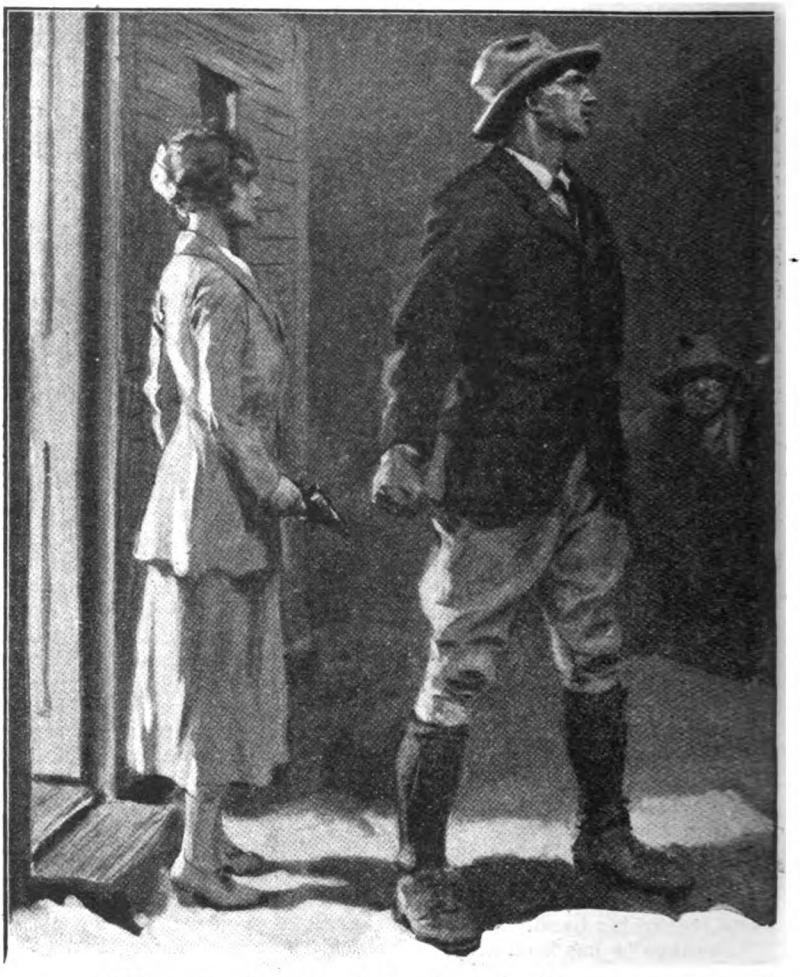
"You damned ruffians!" he yelled. "You devils! What are you doing?"

His anger was in a fashion superb. It dwarfed the anger of the crowd. They gave way before him like a herd of beasts. He sprang in front of the girl, raging like a man possessed.

"You gang of murderers! You hounds! You dirty swine! Get back, do you hear? I'm the boss of this show, and what I say goes, or, if it doesn't, I'll know the reason why. Benson—you dog! What's the meaning of this? Do you think I'll have under me any coward that will badger a woman?"

The man he addressed looked at him with a cowed expression on his hairy face. "I never wanted to interfere with her," he growled. "But she's protecting that damned policeman. It's her own fault for getting in our way."

"You're wrong then!" flashed back Warden. "Fletcher Hill is under my protection, not hers. He has surrendered to me as my prisoner."



"He sprang in front of the girl, raging like a man possessed.

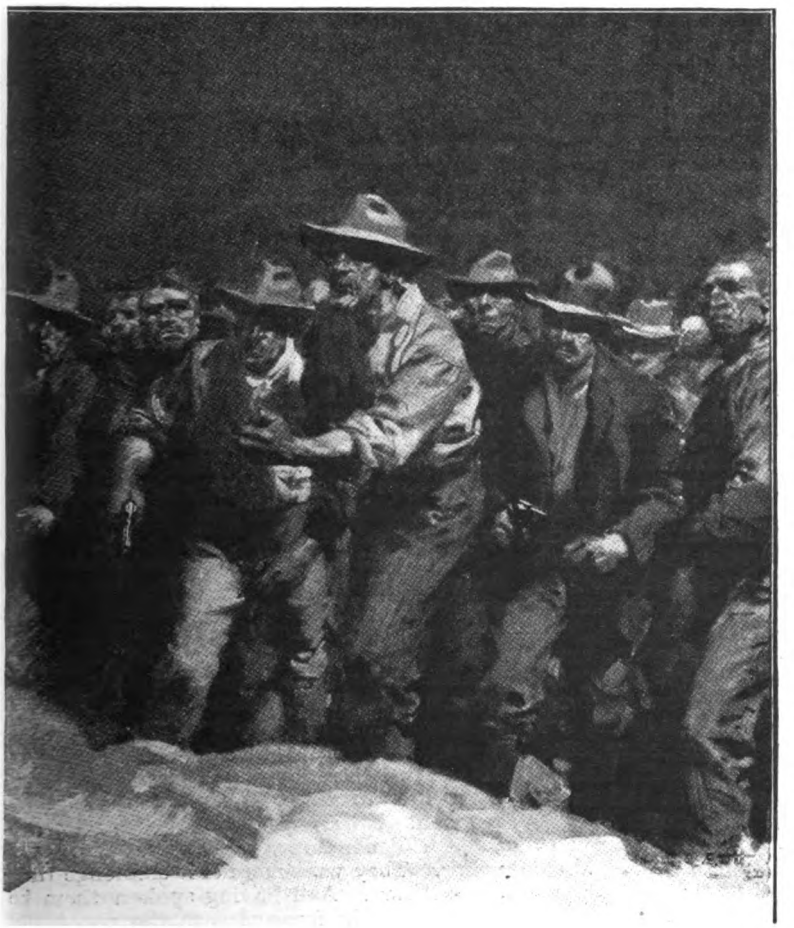
"You've got him?" shouted a score of voices.

"Yes, I've got him." Rapidly Warden made answer. "But I'm not going to hand him over to you to be murdered out of hand. If I'm boss of Barren Valley, I'll be boss. So if any of you are dissatisfied you'll have to reckon with me first. Fletcher Hill is my prisoner, and I'll see to it that he has a fair trial. Got that?"

A low murmur went round. The magnetism of the man was making itself felt. He had that electric force which sways the multitude

against all reason. Single-handed, he gripped them with colossal assurance. They shrank from the flame of his wrath like beaten dogs.

"And before we deal with him," he went on, "there's someone else to be reckoned with. And that's Harley. Does anyone know where Harley is?"



'You gang of murderers! Get back, do you hear?'"

"What do you want with Harley?" asked Benson, glad of this diversion.

"Oh, just to tell him what I think of him, and then—to kick him out!" With curt contempt Warden threw his answer. "He's a traitor and a skunk—smuggles spirits one minute and goes to the police to sell his chums the next; then back to his chums again to sell the police. I know. I've been watching him for some time, the cur. He'd shoot me if he dared."

"He'd better!" yelled a huge miner in the middle of the crowd.

Warden laughed. "That you, Nixon? Come over here! I've got something to tell you—and the other boys. It's the story of this blasted mine." He turned suddenly to the girl who still stood behind him in the lighted doorway. "Miss Burton, I'd like you to hear it too. Shut the door and stand by me!"

Her shining eyes were on his face. She obeyed him mutely, with a submission as unquestioning as that of the rough crowd in front of them.

Very gently he took the revolver from her, drew one out of his own pocket also, and handed both to the big man called Nixon who had come to his side.

"You look after these!" he said. "One is my property. The other belongs to Fletcher Hill — who is my prisoner. Now, boys, you're armed. I'm not. You won't shoot the lady, I know. And for myself I'll take my chance."

"Guess you won't be any the worse for that," grinned Nixon, at his elbow.

Warden's smile gleamed for an instant in answer, but he passed swiftly on. "Did you ever hear of a cattle-thief called Buckskin Bill? He flourished in these parts some five years ago. There was no mine in Barren Valley then. It was just—a smugglers' stronghold."

Some of the men in front of him stirred uneasily. "What's this to do with Fletcher Hill?" asked one.

"I'll tell you," said Warden. "Buckskin Bill, the cattle-thief, was in a tight corner, and he took refuge in Barren Valley. He found the smugglers' *cache*—and he found something else that the smugglers didn't know of. He found—gold. It's a queer thing, boys, but he'd decided—for private

reasons—to give up the cattle-lifting just two days before. The police were hot after him, but they didn't catch him, and the smugglers didn't catch him either. He dodged 'em all, and when he left he said to himself, 'I'll be the boss of Barren Valley when I come back.' After that he went West and starved a bit in the Australian desert till the cattle episode had had time to blow over. Then—it's nearly two years ago now—he came back. The first person he ran into was—Fletcher Hill, the policeman."

He paused with that dramatic instinct which was surely part-secret of his fascination. He had caught the full attention of the crowd, and held them spellbound.

In a moment he went on. "That gave him an idea. Hill, of course, was after other game by that time and didn't spot him. Hill was a magistrate and a civil power at Wallacetown. So Bill went to him, knowing he was straight, anyway, and told him about the gold in Barren Valley, explaining, bold as brass, that he couldn't run the show himself for lack of money. Boys, it was a rank speculation, but Hill was a sport. He caught on. He came to Barren Valley, and they tinkered round together, and they found gold. That same night they came upon the smugglers, too—only escaped running into them by a miracle. Hill didn't say much. He's not a talker. But after they got back to Wallacetown he made an offer to Buckskin Bill which struck him as being a very sporting proposition for a policeman. He said, 'If you care to take on Barren Valley and make an honest concern of it, I'll get the grant and do the backing. The labour is there,' he said, 'but it's got to be honest labour or I won't touch it.' It was a sporting offer, boys, and, of course, Bill jumped. And so a contract was drawn up which had to be signed. And 'What's your name?' said Fletcher Hill." Warden suddenly began to laugh. "On my oath, he didn't know what to say, so he just caught at the first honest-sounding name he could think of. 'Fortescue,' he said. Hill didn't ask a single question. 'Then that mine shall be called the Fortescue Gold Mine,' he said. 'And you'll work it and make an honest man's job of it.' It was a pretty big undertaking, but it sort of appealed to Buckskin Bill, and he took it on. The only real bad mistake he made was when he trusted Harley. Except for that, the thing worked—and worked well. The smuggling trade isn't what it was, eh, boys? That's because Fortescue—and Fletcher Hill—are using up the labour for the mine. And you may hate 'em like hell, but you can't get away from the fact that this mine is run fair and decent, and there isn't a man here who doesn't stand a good chance of making his fortune if he plays a straight game. It's been a chance to make good for every one of us, and it's thanks to Fletcher Hill—because he hasn't asked questions—because he's just taken us on trust—and I'm hanged if he doesn't deserve something better than a bullet through his brain, even if he is a magistrate and a policeman and a man of honour. Have you got that, boys? Then chew it over and swallow it! And when you've done that, I'll tell you something more."

"Oh, let's have it all, boss, now you're at it!" broke in Nixon. "We sha'n't have hysterics now. We're past that stage."

WARDEN turned with a lightning movement and laid his hand upon the girl beside him. "Gentlemen," he said, "it's Fletcher Hill—and not Buckskin Bill—who's the boss of this valley. And he's a good boss—he's a sportsman—he's a maker of men. And this lady is going to be his wife. You're going to stand by her, boys. You aren't going to make a widow of her before she's married. You aren't going to let a skunk like Harley make skunks of you all. You're sportsmen, too—better sportsmen than that stands for—better sportsmen, maybe, than I am myself. What, boys? It's your turn to speak now."

"Wait a bit!" said Nixon. "You haven't quite finished yet, boss."

"No, that's true." Warden paused an instant, then abruptly went forward a pace and stood alone before the crowd. "I've taken a good many chances in my life," he said. "But now I'm taking the biggest of 'em all. Boys, I'm a damned impostor. I've tricked you all, and it's up to you to stick me against a wall and shoot me as I deserve, if you feel that way. For I'm Buckskin Bill—I'm Fortescue—and I'm several kinds of a fool to think I could ever carry it through. Now you know!"

With defiant recklessness he flung the words. They were more of a challenge than a confession. And having spoken them he moved straight forward with the moonlight on his face till he stood practically among the rough crowd.

They opened out to receive him, almost as if at a word of command. And Buckskin Bill, with his head high and his blue eyes flaming, went straight into them with the gait of a conqueror.

Suddenly, with a passionate gesture, he stopped, flinging up his empty right hand. "Well, boys, well? What's the verdict? I'm in your hands."

And a great hoarse roar of enthusiasm went up as they closed around him that was like the bursting asunder of mighty floodgates. They surged about him. They lifted him on their shoulders. They yelled like maniacs and fired their revolvers in the air.

It was the wildest outbreak that Barren Valley had ever heard, and to the girl who watched it, it was the most marvellous revelation of a man's magnetism that she had ever beheld. Alone he had faced and conquered a multitude.

It pierced her strangely, that fierce enthusiasm, stirring her as personal danger had failed to stir. She turned with the tears running down her face and found Fletcher Hill standing unnoticed behind her, silently looking on.

"Oh, isn't he great? Isn't he great?" she said.

He took her arm and led her within. His touch was kind, but wholly without warmth. "There's not much doubt as to who is the boss of Barren Valley," he said.

And with the words he smiled—a smile that was sadder than her tears.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OFFICIAL SEAL.

THAT life could possibly return to a normal course after that amazing night would have seemed to Dot preposterous but for the extremely practical attitude adopted by Fletcher Hill. But when she saw him again on the day after their safe return to Trelevan there was nothing in his demeanour to remind her of the stress through which they had passed. He was, as ever, perfectly calm and self-contained, and wholly uncommunicative. Adela sought in vain to satisfy her curiosity as to the happenings in Barren Valley which her courage had not permitted her to witness for herself. Fletcher Hill was as a closed book, and on some points Dot was equally reticent. By no persuasion could Adela induce her to speak of Bill Warden. She turned the subject whenever it approached him, professing an ignorance which Adela found excessively provoking.

They saw nothing of him during the remainder of the week, and very little of Fletcher Hill, who went to and fro upon his business with a machine-like precision that seemed to pervade his every action. He made no attempt to be alone with Dot, and she, with a shyness almost overwhelming, thankfully accepted his forbearance. The day they had fixed upon for their marriage was rapidly approaching, but she had almost ceased to contemplate it, for somehow it seemed to her that it could never dawn. Something must happen first! Surely something was about to happen! And from day to day she lived for the sight of Bill Warden's great figure and the sound of his steady voice. Anything, she felt, would be bearable if only she could see him once again. But she looked for him in vain.

When her brother joined them at the end of the week a dullness of despair had come upon her. Again she saw herself trapped and helpless, lacking even the spirit to attempt escape. She greeted Jack almost abstractedly, and he observed her throughout the evening with anxiety in his eyes. When it was over he drew her aside for a moment as she was bidding him good-night.

"What's the matter, little 'un? What's wrong?" he whispered, with his arm about her.

She clung to him for an instant with a closeness that was passionate. But, "It's nothing, Jack," she whispered back. "It's nothing."

Then Fletcher Hill came up to them, and they separated. Adela and Dot went up to bed, and the two men were left alone.

SO at length the great day dawned, and nothing had happened. The only news that had reached them was a remark overheard by Adela in the dining-room, to the effect that Harley had thrown up his post and gone.

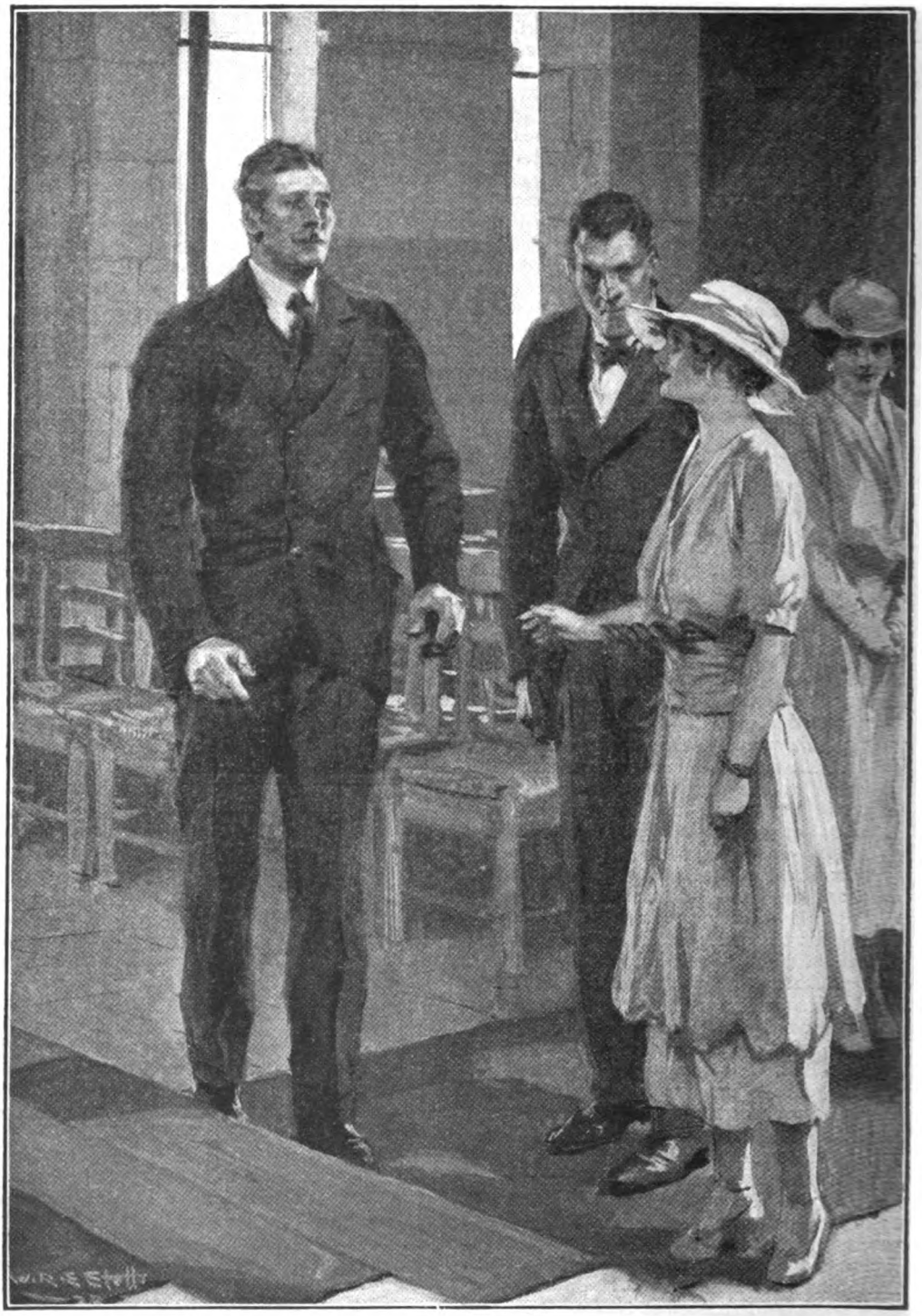
Dot dressed for her wedding with a dazed sense of unreality. Her attire was of the simplest. She wore a hat instead of a veil. It was to be a quiet ceremony in the early morning, for neither she nor Hill desired any unnecessary parade. When she descended the stairs with Adela, Jack was the only person awaiting her in the hall.

He looked at her searchingly as she came down to him, then without a word he took her in his arms and kissed her white face. She saw that he was moved, and wondered within herself at her own utter lack of emotion. Ever since she had lain against Bill Warden's breast, the wild sweet rapture of his hold had seemed to paralyse in her all other feeling. She knew only the longing for his presence, the utter emptiness of a world that held him not.

She drove to the church with her hand in Jack's, Adela talking incessantly the whole way while they two sat in silence. It was a bare building in the heart of the town, but its bareness did not convey any chill to her. She was already too numbly cold for that.

She went up the aisle between Jack and Adela, because the latter good-naturedly remarked that she might as well have as much support as she could get. But before they reached the altar-steps Fletcher Hill came to meet them, and Adela dropped behind.

He also looked for a moment closely into Dot's face, then very quietly he took her cold hand from Jack and drew it through his arm. She glanced at him with a



"And so she came to Bill Warden waiting before the altar. They met—and all the rest was blotted out."

momentary nervousness as Jack also fell behind.

Then some unknown force drew her as the magnet draws the needle, and she looked towards the altar. A man was standing by the steps awaiting her. She saw the free carriage of the great shoulders, the deep fire of the blue eyes. And suddenly her heart gave a wild throb that was anguish, and stood still.

Fletcher Hill's arm went round her. He held her for a second closely to him—more closely than he had ever held her before. But—it came to her later—he did not utter a single word. He only drew her on.

And so she came to Bill Warden waiting before the altar. They met—and all the rest was blotted out.

She went through that service in a breathless wonderment, an amazement that yet was strangely free from distress. For Bill Warden's hand clasped hers throughout, save when Fletcher Hill took it from him for a moment to give her away.

When it was over, and they knelt together in the streaming sunshine of the morning, she felt as if they two were alone in an inner sanctuary that was filled with the Love of God. Later, those sacred moments were the holiest memory of her life. . . . .

Then a strong arm lifted and held her. She turned from the holy place with a faint sigh of regret, turned to meet Fletcher Hill's eyes looking at her with that in them which she was never to forget.

His voice was the first to break through the wonder-spell that bound her.

"Do you think you will ever manage to forgive me?" he said.

She turned swiftly from the arm that encircled her, and impulsively she put her hands upon his shoulders, offering him her lips. "Oh, I don't—know—what—to say," she said, brokenly.

He bent and gravely kissed her. "My dear, there is nothing to be said so far as I am concerned," he said. "If you are happy, I am satisfied."

It was briefly spoken, but it went straight to her heart. She clung to him for a moment without words, and that was all the thanks she ever offered him. For there was nothing to be said.

VERY late on the evening of that wonderful day she sat with Bill Warden on the edge of a rock overlooking a fertile valley of many waters in the Blue Mountains, and heard, with her hand in his, the amazing story of the past few days, which had seemed to her so curiously dream-like.

"I fought hard against marrying you," Bill told her, with the smile she had remembered for so long. "But he had me at every turn—simply rolled me out and wiped the ground with me. Said he'd clap me into prison if I didn't, and when I said 'All right' to that, he turned on me like a tiger and asked if I wanted to break your heart. Oh, he made me feel a ten-times swab, I can tell you. And when I said I didn't want you to marry an uncaught criminal, he just looked me over and said, 'You've sown your wild oats. As your partner, I am sponsor for your respectability.' I knew what that meant, knew he'd stand by me through thick and thin, whatever turned up. It was the official seal with a vengeance, for what Fletcher Hill says goes in these parts. But it went against the grain, little new chum. It made me sick with myself. I hated playing his game against himself. It was the vilest thing I ever did. I couldn't have done it—except for you."

The little hand that held his tightened. She leaned her cheek against his shoulder. "Shall I tell you something?" she whispered. "I couldn't have done it either—except for—you."

His arm clasped her. "I'm such a poor sort of creature, darling," he said. "I'll work for you—live for you—die for you. But I shall never be worthy of you."

She lifted her face to his in the gathering darkness. "Dear love," she said, "do you remember how—once—you asked me to treat you—without prejudice? But I never have—and I don't believe I ever shall. Fletcher Hill is right to trust you. He is a judge of men. But I—I am only the woman who loves you, and—somehow—whichever way I take you—I'm always prejudiced—in your favour."

The low words ended against his lips. He kissed her closely, passionately. "My little chum," he said, "I will be worthy—I will be worthy—so help me God!"

He was near to tears as he uttered his oath; but presently, when he turned back her sleeve to kiss the place where first his lips had lingered, they laughed together—the tender laughter of lovers in the happy morning-time of life.

Dr. Ethel Smyth, the well-known musician, is also widely known as the author of that delightful volume of reminiscences, "Impressions That Remained." We think that our readers will agree that she has written nothing more striking and interesting than the following description of Queen Victoria.

Two Glimpses of QUEEN VICTORIA

BY

Dr. ETHEL SMYTH

IN "Impressions That Remained," speaking of our kind friend and neighbour, the Empress Eugénie, I mentioned that she had always been interested in the efforts of women to overcome sex-prejudice, and had taken action during the Second Empire towards that end. It was about a year after my career as public musician began that I came to know her well, and from the very first she followed my proceedings with the greatest sympathy. The fate of my Mass for solo voices and chorus, which, so far, existed in pianoforte score only, interested her particularly, because most of it had been written while I was staying with her at Cap Martin; and, being wholly unmusical herself—a great asset in a musical patron—she readily accepted the composer's estimate of its worth!

I do not think that she was less delighted than I myself when, in the autumn of 1891, Mr. Barnby (later Sir Joseph), Director of the Royal Choral Society, provisionally accepted the Mass for production at the Albert Hall. By "provisionally" I mean that I could not get him to fix a date, but the general idea was that the performance would be in the second half of the ensuing season—that is, about March, 1892.

Dr. Ethel Smyth.
Photo. Elliott & Fry.

Mr. Barnby's reluctance to name the day rather troubled me, and the Empress thought it would help matters if she commissioned me to inform him that she herself might possibly be present—a wonderful concession to friendship, for since 1870 she had refused to appear officially in any public place.

This proposal of hers, which I should never have dared to suggest, showed how thoroughly she had grasped the musical situation in England, where, even before the war denuded the country of concert-going Germans, good music does not pay. That being so, composers who have money fight their way with it, and those who have not try to get up a little boom—which comes to the same thing. If you cannot afford to distribute dozens of tickets among friends and supporters, the public must be induced to buy; and Sir Thomas Beecham once said that the safest plan would be to introduce an elephant that can stand on its trunk, or some such spot of relief, into every concert programme.

In this spirit, then, did the Empress tackle my problem. Further, learning that the Duke of Edinburgh was President of the Royal Choral Society, she thought there could be no harm in manifesting her sympathy for me under the eyes of the Royal Family. An excellent

opportunity of doing so lay to hand : it had been for many years the Queen's habit to put one of her Scotch houses at the Empress's disposal during the autumn months, and thus it came to pass that in October I was invited to join her at Birkhall.

Birkhall was a Laird's house, not big, but comfortable, about eight miles from Balmoral, and in the midst of most beautiful scenery. My first amazed impression had nothing to do with the landscape, however, but with the Empress herself. Oh, horror ! She, who loathed caps and never wore them, now appeared at the front door with a little erection of black lace on her small, beautifully-poised head ! What did this portend ? It portended that the Queen did not approve of capless old ladies, and this compromise was the result. I was indignant at such pusillanimity on her part, but she only laughed and said what on earth did it signify ? "*Si cela fait plaisir à votre Reine !*"

THE day after my arrival the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and Prince Henry of Battenberg came over to see her, and as the Duchess and the Prince were both fond of music I was asked to sing. Following on that, the Queen sent a message to say that when she came to pay her own visit next day I was to be presented.

Mrs. R. Crawshay, whose jokes I am never weary of repeating, once said to an old lady from South Africa who had remarked that you mustn't play games with the English climate : "No ; or, at least, only *indoor* games!" But the Queen's life was one long outdoor game with the Scotch climate—a still more uncertain playfellow ; and next day a storm was raging that, whatever one may say about the fleeting character of Scotch storms, began at breakfast and lasted till nightfall. I could never have believed that any old lady would venture out in such weather, but I was informed, and it proved to be true, that the Queen would infallibly turn up, and probably in an open carriage ; also, that her ladies would wear the minimum of wraps, as the Queen herself never caught cold and had a great objection to being crowded out by rugs and furs.

Some of her ladies were old and frail, but the rigours of a Scotch "waiting," including a north-east wind *with rain*, were evidently nullified by the glow of loyalty within their bosoms. On the other hand, dread of displeasing "the dear Queen," as she was always called (and rightly, for, if dreaded, she was greatly beloved), may have had something to do with it. Terror often acts as a tonic, and the first rule in the Primer for Courtiers —a fine rule that fashions heroes and heroines—is : "Thou shalt not be ill." Anyhow, I never heard of any of her ladies dying of pneumonia, as might have been expected, after these terrific drives, that sometimes lasted hours and hours.

The Queen was expected at three o'clock, but long before that hour the Empress was scouting in passages and peering into the storm-tossed garden to make sure that the coast was clear, for the Queen had the greatest horror of coming across stray people. Indeed, I know of a case where an unlucky Maid of Honour, surprised in the corridor of Windsor Castle by the unexpected appearance of Her Majesty in the far distance, remained concealed and trembling behind a curtain for half an hour while the Empress of India was supervising the placing of tributes from an Indian Prince. And when the Royal carriage arrived at Birkhall, but for the Empress, Mme. Arcos, and the footmen, it might have been a deserted house.

The Empress and Mme. Arcos received the Queen and Princess Christian at the front door, and the red carpet, unrolled in a flash, was sopping wet before the august visitors had time to set foot on it. The three Royal ladies then disappeared into the drawing-room, while Mme. Arcos and Lady Ampthill, who was in waiting on the Queen, came into the room where I, in another sense, was also in waiting. Presently the Empress herself looked in, beckoned to me, I followed—and lo ! I was in the Presence.

Seated on one of the ordinary cane-chairs, no doubt because easier to get up from, was a wee little old lady with exactly the face of the photographs, though paler than one expected—on her head a close white straw hat, tied under her chin with a black ribbon (the only possible plan, given the storm and an open barouche). It is a well-known fact that, in spite of a physique that did not lend itself to effects of majesty, the personality of the Queen was imposing to the last degree —such was the dignity that enwrapped it. The first impression was so awe-inspiring that I should have been terrified but for the wonderful blue, child-like eyes, and the sweetest, most entrancing smile I have ever seen on human face.

The Empress had told me that, though the Queen had chronic sciatica, and walked with a stick, she never permitted anyone to help her out of her chair, even when that chair had no arms. Much to my astonishment, she now got up to shake hands with me, lifting herself with a sort of one, two, three, and away movement, which it took all one's strength of character not to assist with a hand under her elbow.

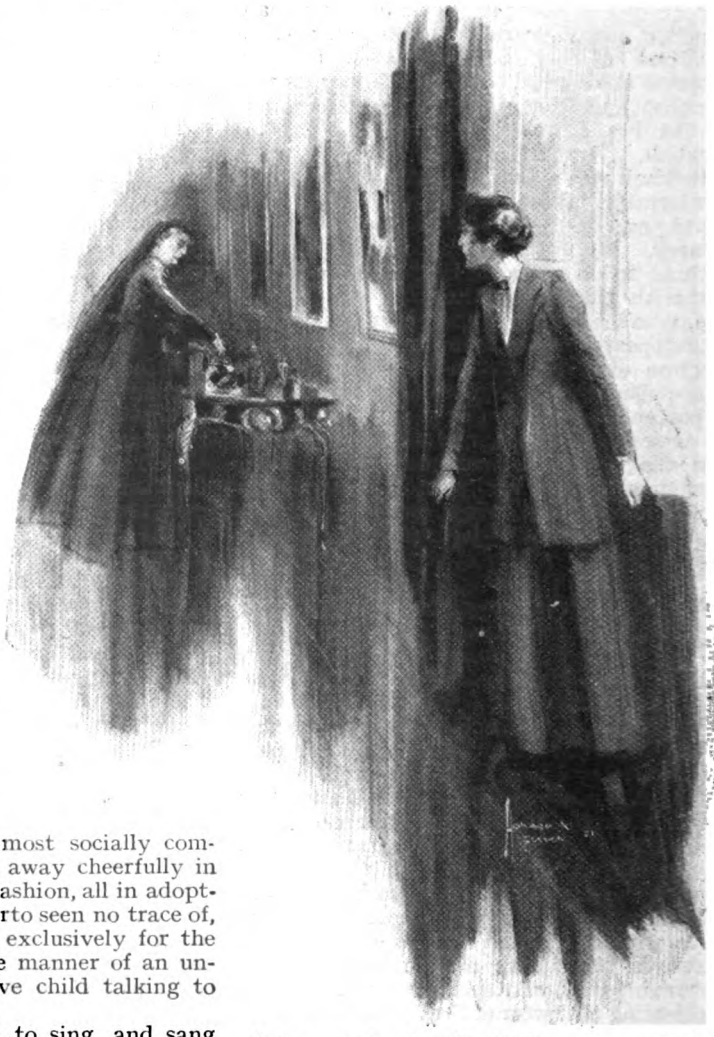
I cannot remember what passed at that interview except that she was markedly

kind, and that Princess Christian, who, as I was to find out later, always knew what was the helpful thing to say, and said it, at once remarked that she had heard a great deal about me from the Bishop of Rochester and his wife, the point being that the Bishop (who is now Archbishop of Canterbury) had been Dean of Windsor, and, besides being the Queen's Private Chaplain, was one of her most valued friends and advisers. A further passport to favour was the fact that I could claim to be connected with the Bishop, his brother having married my eldest sister.

It was not the Queen's way, and not according to the tradition she had been brought up in, to put you at your ease, as some Sovereigns do, and bring about anything distantly approaching conversation. But the Empress, who was the most socially competent of beings, talked away cheerfully in her own easy, delightful fashion, all in adopting a manner I had hitherto seen no trace of, and which was reserved exclusively for the Queen—something of the manner of an unembarrassed but attentive child talking to its grandmother.

Presently I was asked to sing, and sang several German songs, which seemed to please my audience so highly that the Empress was emboldened to say: "You ought to hear her sing her Mass!" Whereupon I performed the *Benedictus* and the *Sanctus* after the manner of composers, which means singing the chorus as well as the solo parts, and trumpeting forth orchestral effects as best you can—a somewhat noisy proceeding in a small room. I had warned the Empress that if I did it at all it would be done in that fashion, and being a most courageous woman she took the responsibility—with no dire results, as subsequent events were to prove. Indeed, she remarked afterwards that beyond doubt the Queen really was delighted with this novel experience, not merely being polite.

The Queen then expressed a hope that the Empress would bring me to Balmoral, after



'An unlucky Maid of Honour, surprised by the unexpected appearance of Her Majesty, remained concealed and trembling behind a curtain for half an hour.'

which I was dismissed and joined the official ladies in the other room. There we had tea, and I listened for the first time, in high edification, to the delicate and guarded style of intercourse that appears to be the right thing between such interlocutors. The storm, which had somewhat abated in honour of the Queen's arrival, was now raging more wildly than ever, the rain descending like one continuous waterfall. It was hardly possible to hear oneself speak, but I managed to ask Lady Ampthill if the Queen would have the carriage shut going home, and to catch her serene reply: "Oh, dear no, I think not." Watching their

departure from behind a curtain a little later on, I saw that this incredible prediction was fulfilled—and my ideas on the subject of what " Queen's weather " really amounts to were modified for evermore.

The Empress told us, after she was gone, that from first to last the Queen made not the slightest comment on the tempest, nor any move to depart till a gilly came banging at the drawing-room door, and said : " Your Majesty must go—the horses can't stand this "—the sort of thing not one of her children would have dared to say, unless, perhaps, the Empress Frederick.

In due time came the promised command, and one evening I found myself struggling to achieve as presentable a toilette as possible, having been bidden, with the Empress, to dine at Balmoral. At the last moment she herself put a few finishing touches, producing and arranging upon my head a grand jet serpent, and disposing other jetty splendours about my person, for the Court was (as usual) in mourning.

I, of course, dined with the Household—such an everyday affair to hundreds of people that they would hardly deem it worth talking about. But to me it was a new, interesting, and rather alarming experience ; nor has custom staled the impression, for it remained solitary of its kind.

To begin with, the dinner service impressed me. My own dog, Marco, ate off a tin platter, and often, when cutting away gristle or severing bones for him, I had shuddered at the contact of steel and metal. But the first time your own knife and fork are privileged to scratch about on gold and silver plate, unpleasant as it is, you are impressed. I was impressed, too, by the air of distinguished boredom, combined with a well-bred but unmistakable consciousness of occupying an enviable position, that people about a Court invariably distil—as I was to find out in after years. And again, as at Birkhall, the Agag-like gait of the conversation was extremely impressive. I cannot claim to be constitutionally shy, which may be a sign of conceit, and may, on the other hand, indicate that the drama itself, and not your own part in it, absorbs most of your attention ; but surely, I said to myself, the genius of this place must affect even the most brazen !

With what invisible pitfalls is one surrounded, how terrible must be the penalties incurred by one false step, since all are keyed up, as a matter of habit, to this extraordinarily high pitch ! No ups and downs of mood here, no enthusiasm, no individual opinions, and, for Heaven's sake, no originality ! If the writing on the wall were to reveal itself (for there is writing on every wall, could one but detect it) you would read these words : " Corners rounded off here while you Wait."

All the same, however, dinner was very pleasant. I had met one or two of the Equerries and Maids of Honour at the Deanery, and as Tosti, the song-writer, whom I liked extremely, sat on one side of me, I was quite sorry when the doors were flung open by scarlet-liveried footmen—signal that the Queen was ready for our presence.

I MUST now nerve myself to recount the story of one of the most appalling blunders I ever committed in my life ; even to-day, though I can laugh about it, the thought of it gives me a slight sinking ! . . . At the moment, though conscious of having sinned against ritual, I did not realize the full enormity of my crime—you must have been bred to Courts to do that. And though, as time went on, I grasped it exhaustively, somehow or other I shrank from cross-questioning the Empress on the subject. For one thing, so great was her kindness that she would have attenuated my *faux pas ;* for another, knowing what her agony must have been as she watched her young friend's proceedings, I fancied she would prefer not to live through it all again ! Finally, truth to tell, the whole thing was humiliating to me to think of ! Despicable, no doubt, to take it as hard as all that, but so it was.

Why no one prepared me for the situation I was about to become part of, why no one gave me a hint how to comport myself in it, I cannot imagine. The Empress was always thinking out and guarding against eventualities in what seemed to me almost a feverish fashion, yet this time she said not a word, and I can only suppose she felt certain that my darkness would be enlightened by Mme. Arcos or one of the Maids of Honour. But it was not, and when we left the dinner-table, being the only guest of my sex present, I gaily headed the procession drawing-roomwards, my mind innocently set on making myself agreeable when I got there.

It was a large room, with deep bay-windows, and the first thing I noticed was that the sofas and chairs were tightly upholstered in the gay Stuart tartan—a proof that to be Queen of Scotland involves painful æsthetic concessions.

On a large hearthrug—tartan too, I think—in front of the grate, in which I rather fancy a few logs burned (though, given Her Majesty's hardy habits, it seems improbable), stood the Queen, conversing with the Empress in a lively manner that contrasted with the somewhat halting intercourse at Birkhall. Evidently, I said to myself, the animating effects of a good dinner may be counted on even at the less frivolous European Courts.

Leading up to the two august ladies was an avenue composed of Royal personages, ranged, as I afterwards found out, in order of precedence, the highest in rank being closest to the hearthrug, which avenue, broadening towards its base, gradually became mere ladies and gentlemen of the Court, and finally petered out in a group of Maids of Honour, huddled ingloriously in the bay-window.

What I ought to have done, I believe, was to stand rigid and silent among these last, endeavouring to catch the eye of the Queen and the Princesses, curtsy profoundly when successful, and await events. Will it be believed that what I did do was to advance unconcernedly up the avenue, with a polite intention to say "How do you do" to the Queen? . . .

If a young dog strays up the aisle during church no one says anything, no one does anything, but, none the less, he soon becomes aware that something is wrong. Even so, as the distance between myself and the hearthrug diminished, did I become aware that something was very wrong indeed; my cheerful confidence waned and my step faltered. I saw the Queen slightly turn her head, look at me for a second as if I were

"As the distance between myself and the hearthrug diminished, I became aware that turn her head, look at me for a second as if I were a strange insect, and

some strange insect, and resume her conversation with the Empress. If I had been a Brobdingnagian spider as big as a retriever she would not have acted differently. Someone would remove the creature; that was enough. I did not catch the Empress's eye, but I now know that since she could not

something was very wrong indeed. I saw the Queen slightly resume her conversation with the Empress."

shriek: "*Mon Dieu, n'avancez pas!*" she must have wished the earth would open and swallow her up. At this moment dear, human Princess Christian, who had come more in contact with low life than the Queen, stepped forward and shook hands with me—and somehow or other, I know not how, I backed away into the obscurity from which I should never have emerged.

Afterwards I heard all about that Hearthrug, and could gauge the dimensions of my own audacity. It was as sacred a carpet as exists outside Mohammedanism, and the distance from it at which people were permitted to station themselves—if invited to come near it at all—was the measure of their rank and importance. Only crowned heads trod it as a right, or occasionally, as supreme honour, some very favourite Minister, like Lord Beaconsfield. If such as I had set foot upon it, as, but for the blessed intervention of Princess Christian, I might have done—but, no! a miracle would have been wrought, a thunderbolt would have fallen upon a tartan sofa and created a diversion. Something—anything would have happened rather than such sacrilege could have been permitted!

When the legitimate moment came for my presence being recognized by the Queen, I cannot recall how it was accomplished; whether she went the round of the company, or whether I was summoned to her chair. But whichever it was, my scandalous entry was evidently condoned, for nothing could be more gracious than her manner. And presently, having received the command to "Let us hear some more of your Mass," I was seated at a huge, yawning grand piano, with the Queen and the Empress right and left, in closest proximity. I ventured to ask whether the music was to be rendered as at Birkhall—for such a proceeding seemed unthinkable in these surroundings—but I was assured that exactly that rendering was "so very interesting," and would be welcome.

I looked round the frozen ranks of impending listeners, each one of them exhaling decorum and self-restraint unutterable. A vault beneath a church would have been a

more kindling *mise-en-scène* for an inspirational effort on a large scale. Not because of the Royalties, who one and all showed genuine and kindly interest, but because of their inevitable adjunct—the "Court"! Straight in the line of vision, glued against a distant wall, stood Lord Cross, the Minister in Attendance, looking startlingly like his caricature in *Punch*, "very Cross." I afterwards learned that I had not a more appreciative listener in the room. But how could one guess that? Well, there was nothing for it but to concentrate upon the Mass.

Strange to relate, once I got under way there was something inspiring in the very incongruity of the whole thing, the desperateness of such a venture! Never did I get through one of these performances better, nor enjoy doing it more. I cannot remember what numbers I chose, but the *Sanctus* must have been one of them, for in it is a D trumpet which I remember rang out astonishingly in that superbly acoustic drawing-room. I dared not let my eyes wander in the direction of the listeners while the high D was being held, lest what I might see should wreck everything; but I need not have been afraid, as I was to learn presently.

And now, emboldened by the sonority of the place, I did the *Gloria*—the most tempestuous and, I thought, the best number of all. At a certain drum effect a foot, even, came into play, and I fancy that, as regards volume of sound at least, the presence of a real chorus and orchestra was scarcely missed! This time, fortified by the simplicity and genuineness of the Sovereign's appreciation, I thought I would risk a glance at the faces of her terrifying Court. What matter if astonishment and secret scandalization be there depicted? I was firm in the saddle now, not easily to be thrown!

I glanced. They were stupendous. No surprise, no emotion of any kind—a spectacle so exciting, because so fantastic, that the result was a finale to that *Gloria* such as I had never before succeeded in wresting out!

ONCE more the Queen seemed really delighted—whether for the Empress's sake or because she liked it, who shall say? Anyhow, the Hereditary Grand Duke of Hesse, who was a cultivated musician, seemed really to understand what he had been listening to, and so did Princess Christian, who was constantly in touch with serious music and musicians. And I could see that the beloved Empress, in spite of the incident in the Royal avenue, did not repent her of the *rôle* she had undertaken—according to her (for I have said she accepted the composer's view of the Mass) the *rôle* of a foreigner who introduces a gifted Englishwoman to the Queen of England!

Then Tosti, accompanying himself, sang some favourite songs of his own composition with exquisite blending of voice, phrasing, and accompaniment. It was small art, but real art. Most of the people to whom I expressed an ecstasy that even the prevailing discretion could not damp, replied instantaneously, as if uttering one of the responses in church: "Yes, but what a pity his voice is so small!" And I perceived that this was the accepted formula for Tosti.

When the Queen said "Good night" to me she added a hope "that we shall see you at Windsor," and then she and her Imperial guest moved towards a special Royal exit for though the Empress, the Marquess of Bassano (who was in attendance on her), Mme. Arcos, and I were all driving home in the same carriage, it would never do for us three to go out by the same door as a crowned head.

This was lucky, for I now had the chance of witnessing a wonderful bit of ritual. Arrived on the threshold, the while we mortals stood rigid, the Queen motioned the Empress to pass before her; this the Empress gracefully declined to do. They then curtsied low to each other. The movement of the Queen, crippled though she was, was amazingly easy and dignified, but the Empress, who was then sixty-seven, made an exquisite sweep down to the floor and up again, all in one gesture, that I can only liken to a flower bent and released by the wind. They then passed *together* out of the door, practically shoulder to shoulder; but I believe, though far be it from my ignorance to dogmatize, that on such occasions the visiting Sovereign is permitted to permit the home Sovereign to lag about one inch behind.

Thinking of that superb reverence of the Empress's which I am everlastingly glad to have seen, I have reflected that every bone in her body must have been placed true in its socket to the millionth part of an inch; that her proportions must have been perfect, the fibre of her muscles, the texture of her skin, of the most superb quality, and that this is probably what the word "beauty" means. Otherwise, so unbroken, so undulating was the motion, that one could only explain it by what an old Irish servant remarked to a conspicuously active friend of mine, temporarily crippled with sciatica: "To think of *you* like this, you that goes flourishing about as if you hadn't a bone in your body!"

I may add that the Empress was not required to drain the cup of humiliation to the dregs that night, inasmuch as the black jet serpent did not come down in coils over my face during the *Gloria*, as might have been expected, but not till we were safe in the carriage and half-way home.

A MIXED THREESOME

A Golfing Story

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY E. H. SHEPARD.

IT was the holiday season, and during the holidays the Greens Committees have decided that the payment of twenty guineas shall entitle fathers of families not only to infest the course themselves, but also to decant their nearest and dearest upon it in whatever quantity they please. All over the links, in consequence, happy, laughing groups of children had broken out like a rash. A wan-faced adult, who had been held up for ten minutes while a drove of issue quarrelled over whether little Claude had taken two hundred or two hundred and twenty approach shots to reach the ninth green, sank into a seat beside the Oldest Member.

"What luck?" inquired the Sage.

"None to speak of," returned the other, moodily. "I thought I had bagged a small boy in a Lord Fauntleroy suit on the sixth, but he ducked. These children make me tired. They should be bowling their hoops in the road. Golf is a game for grown-ups. How can a fellow play, with a platoon of progeny blocking him at every hole?"

The Oldest Member shook his head. He could not subscribe to these sentiments.

NO doubt (said the Oldest Member) the summer golf-child is, from the point of view of the player who likes to get round the course in a single afternoon, something of a trial; but, personally, I confess, it pleases me to see my fellow human beings—and into this category golf-children, though at the moment you may not be broad-minded enough to admit it, undoubtedly fall—taking to the noblest of games at an early age. Golf, like measles, should be caught young, for, if postponed to riper years, the results may be serious. Let me tell you the story of Mortimer Sturgis, which illustrates what I mean rather aptly.

Mortimer Sturgis, when I first knew him, was a care-free man of thirty-eight, of amiable character and independent means, which he increased from time to time by judicious ventures on the Stock Exchange. Although he had never played golf, his had not been altogether an ill-spent life. He swung a creditable racket at tennis, was always ready to contribute a baritone solo to charity concerts, and gave freely to the poor. He was what you might call a golden-mean man, good-hearted rather than magnetic, with no serious vices and no heroic virtues. For a hobby, he had taken up the collecting of porcelain vases, and he was engaged to Betty Weston, a charming girl of twenty-five, a lifelong friend of mine.

I liked Mortimer. Everybody liked him. But, at the same time, I was a little surprised that a girl like Betty should have become engaged to him. As I said before, he was not magnetic; and magnetism, I thought, was the chief quality she would have demanded in a man. Betty was one of those ardent, vivid girls, with an intense capacity for hero-worship, and I would have supposed that something more in the nature of a plumed knight or a corsair of the deep would have been her ideal. But, of course, if there is a branch of modern industry where the demand is greater than the supply, it is the manufacture of knights and corsairs; and nowadays a girl, however flaming her aspirations, has to take the best she can get. I must admit that Betty seemed perfectly content with Mortimer.

Such, then, was the state of affairs when Eddie Denton arrived, and the trouble began.

I was escorting Betty home one evening after a tea-party at which we had been fellow-guests, when, walking down the road, we happened to espy Mortimer. He broke into a run when he saw us, and galloped up, waving a piece of paper in his hand. He was

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plainly excited, a thing which was unusual in this well-balanced man. His broad, good-humoured face was working violently.

"Good news!" he cried. "Good news! Dear old Eddie's back!"

"Oh, how nice for you, dear!" said Betty. "Eddie Denton is Mortimer's best friend," she explained to me. "He has told me so much about him. I have been looking forward to his coming home. Mortie thinks the world of him."

"So will you, when you know him," cried Mortimer. "Dear old Eddie! He's a wonder! The best fellow on earth! We were at school and the 'Varsity together. There's nobody like Eddie! He landed yesterday. Just home from Central Africa. He's an explorer, you know," he said to me. "Spends all his time in places where it's death for a white man to go."

"An explorer!" I heard Betty breathe, as if to herself. I was not so impressed, I fear, as she was. Explorers, as a matter of fact, leave me a trifle cold. It has always seemed to me that the difficulties of their life are greatly exaggerated—generally by themselves. In a large country like Africa, for instance, I should imagine that it was almost impossible for a man not to get somewhere if he goes on long enough. Give *me* the fellow who can plunge into the bowels of the earth at Piccadilly Circus and find the right Tube train with nothing but a lot of misleading signs to guide him. However, we are not all constituted alike in this world, and it was apparent from the flush on her cheek and the light in her eyes that Betty admired explorers.

"I wired to him at once," went on Mortimer, "and insisted on his coming down here. It's two years since I saw him. You don't know how I have looked forward, dear, to you and Eddie meeting. He is just your sort. I know how romantic you are and keen on adventure and all that. Well, you should hear Eddie tell the story of how he brought down the bull *bongo* with his last cartridge after all the *pongos*, or native bearers, had fled into the *dongo*, or undergrowth."

"I should love to!" whispered Betty, her eyes glowing. I suppose to an impressionable girl these things really are of absorbing interest. For myself, *bongos* intrigue me even less than *pongos*, while *dongos* frankly bore me. "When do you expect him?"

"He will get my wire to-night. I'm hoping we shall see the dear old fellow to-morrow afternoon some time. How surprised old Eddie will be to hear that I'm engaged. He's such a confirmed bachelor himself. He told me once that he considered the wisest thing ever said by human tongue was the Swahili proverb—'Whoso taketh a woman into his kraal depositeth himself straightway in the *wongo*.' *W'ongo*, he tells me, is a sort of broth composed of herbs and meat-bones, corresponding to our gumbo. You must get Eddie to give it you in the original Swahili. It sounds even better."

I saw the girl's eyes flash, and there came into her face that peculiar set expression which married men know. It passed in an instant, but not before it had given me material for thought which lasted me all the way to my house and into the silent watches of the night. I was fond of Mortimer Sturgis, and I could see trouble ahead for him as plainly as though I had been a palmist reading his hand at two guineas a visit. There are other proverbs fully as wise as the one which Mortimer had translated from the Swahili, and one of the wisest is that quaint old East London saying, handed down from one generation of costermongers to another, and whispered at midnight in the wigwams of the whelk-sellers: "Never introduce your donah to a pal." In those seven words is contained the wisdom of the ages.

I could read the future so plainly. What but one thing could happen after Mortimer had influenced Betty's imagination with his stories of his friend's romantic career, and added the finishing touch by advertising him as a woman-hater? He might just as well have asked for his ring back at once. My heart bled for Mortimer.

I HAPPENED to call at his house on the second evening of the explorer's visit, and already the mischief had been done.

Denton was one of those lean, hard-bitten men with smouldering eyes and a brick-red complexion. He looked what he was, the man of action and enterprise. He had the wiry frame and strong jaw without which no explorer is complete, and Mortimer, beside him, seemed but a poor, soft product of our hot-house civilization. Mortimer, I forgot to say, wore glasses; and, if there is one time more than another when a man should not wear glasses, it is while a strong-faced, keen-eyed wanderer in the wilds is telling a beautiful girl the story of his adventures.

For this was what Denton was doing. My arrival seemed to have interrupted him in the middle of a narrative. He shook my hand in a strong, silent sort of way, and resumed:—

"Well, the natives seemed fairly friendly, so I decided to stay the night."

I made a mental note never to seem fairly friendly to an explorer. If you do, he always decides to stay the night.

"Mortimer broke into a run when he saw us. 'Good news!' he cried. 'Good news!'"

" In the morning they took me down to the river. At this point it widens into a *kongo*, or pool, and it was here, they told me, that the crocodile mostly lived, subsisting on the native oxen—the short-horned *jongos* —which, swept away by the current while crossing the ford above, were carried down on the *longos*, or rapids. It was not, however, till the second evening that I managed to catch sight of his ugly snout above the surface. I waited around, and on the third day I saw him suddenly come out of the water and heave his whole length on to a sandbank in mid-stream and go to sleep in the sun. He was certainly a monster—fully thirty—you have never been in Central Africa, have you, Miss Weston ? No ? You ought to go there !—fully fifty feet from tip to tail. There he lay, glistening. I shall never forget the sight."

HE broke off to light a cigarette. I heard Betty draw in her breath sharply. Mortimer was beaming through his glasses with the air of the owner of a dog which is astonishing a drawing-room with its clever tricks.

"And what did you do then, Mr. Denton ?" asked Betty, breathlessly.

" Yes, what did you do then, old chap ? " said Mortimer.

Denton blew out the match and dropped it on the ash-tray.

" Eh ? Oh," he said, carelessly, " I swam across and shot him."

" Swam across and shot him ! "

" Yes. It seemed to me that the chance was too good to be missed. Of course, I might have had a pot at him from the bank, but the chances were I wouldn't have hit him in a vital place. So I swam across to the sandbank, put the muzzle of my gun in his mouth, and pulled the trigger. I have rarely seen a crocodile so taken aback."

" But how dreadfully dangerous ! "

" Oh, danger ! " Eddie Denton laughed lightly. " One drops into the habit of taking a few risks out there, you know. Talking of *danger*, the time when things really did look a little nasty was when the wounded *gongo* cornered me in a narrow *tongo* and I only had a pocket-knife with everything in it broken except the corkscrew and the thing for taking stones out of horses' hoofs. It was like this—— "

I could bear no more. I am a tender-hearted man, and I made some excuse and got away. From the expression on the girl's face I could see that it was only a question of days before she gave her heart to this romantic newcomer.

As a matter of fact, it was on the following afternoon that she called on me and told me that the worst had happened. I had known her from a child, you understand, and she always confided her troubles to me.

" I want your advice," she began. " I'm so wretched ! "

She burst into tears. I could see the poor girl was in a highly nervous condition, so I did my best to calm her by describing how I had once done the long hole in four. My friends tell me that there is no finer soporific, and it seemed as though they may be right, for presently, just as I had reached the point where I laid my approach-putt dead from a distance of fifteen feet, she became quieter. She dried her eyes, yawned once or twice, and looked at me bravely.

" I love Eddie Denton ! " she said.

" I feared as much. When did you feel this coming on ? "

" It crashed on me like a thunderbolt last night after dinner. We were walking in the garden, and he was just telling me how he had been bitten by a poisonous *zongo*, when I seemed to go all giddy. When I came to myself I was in Eddie's arms. His face was pressed against mine, and he was gargling."

" Gargling ? "

" I thought so at first. But he reassured me. He was merely speaking in one of the lesser-known dialects of the Walla-Walla natives of Eastern Uganda, into which he always drops in moments of great emotion. He soon recovered sufficiently to give me a rough translation, and then I knew that he loved me. He kissed me. I kissed him. We kissed each other."

" And where was Mortimer all this while ? "

" Indoors, cataloguing his collection of vases."

For a moment, I confess, I was inclined to abandon Mortimer's cause. A man, I felt, who could stay indoors cataloguing vases while his *fiancée* wandered in the moonlight with explorers deserved all that was coming to him. I overcame the feeling.

" Have you told him ? "

" Of course not."

" You don't think it might be of interest to him ? "

" How can I tell him ? It would break his heart. I am awfully fond of Mortimer. So is Eddie. We would both die rather than do anything to hurt him. Eddie is the soul of honour. He agrees with me that Mortimer must never know."

" Then you aren't going to break off your engagement ? "

" I couldn't. Eddie feels the same. He says that, unless something can be done, he will say good-bye to me and creep far, far away to some distant desert, and there, in the great stillness, broken only by the cry of the prowling *yongo*, try to forget."

" When you say ' unless something can be

"Mortimer wore glasses; and if there is a time when a man should not wear glasses it is while a strong-faced, keen-eyed wanderer in the wilds is telling a beautiful girl the story of his adventures."

done,' what do you mean? What can be done?"

"I thought you might have something to suggest. Don't you think it possible that somehow Mortimer might take it into his head to break the engagement himself?"

"Absurd! He loves you devotedly."

"I'm afraid so. Only the other day I dropped one of his best vases, and he just smiled and said it didn't matter."

"I can give you even better proof than that. This morning Mortimer came to me and asked me to give him secret lessons in golf."

"Golf! But he despises golf."

"Exactly. But he is going to learn it for your sake."

"But why secret lessons?"

"Because he wants to keep it a surprise for your birthday. Now can you doubt his love?"

"I am not worthy of him!" she whispered.

The words gave me an idea.

"Suppose," I said, "we could convince Mortimer of that!"

"I don't understand."

"Suppose, for instance, he could be made to believe that you were, let us say, a dipsomaniac."

She shook her head. "He knows that already."

"What!"

"Yes; I told him I sometimes walked in my sleep."

"I mean a secret drinker."

"Nothing will induce me to pretend to be a secret drinker."

"Then a drug-fiend?" I suggested, hopefully.

"I hate medicine."

"I have it!" I said. "A kleptomaniac."

"What is that?"

"A person who steals things."

"Oh, that's horrid."

"Not at all. It's a perfectly ladylike thing to do. You don't know you do it."

"But, if I don't know I do it, how do I know I do it?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"I mean, how can I tell Mortimer I do it if I don't know?"

"You don't tell him. I will tell him. I will inform him to-morrow that you called on me this afternoon and stole my watch and"—I glanced about the room—"my silver matchbox."

"I'd rather have that little vinaigrette."

"You don't get either. I merely say you stole it. What will happen?"

"Mortimer will hit you with a cleek."

"Not at all. I am an old man. My white hairs protect me. What he will do is to insist on confronting me with you and asking you to deny the foul charge."

"And then?"

"Then you admit it and release him from his engagement."

She sat for a while in silence. I could see that my words had made an impression.

"I think it's a splendid idea. Thank you very much." She rose and moved to the door. "I knew you would suggest something wonderful." She hesitated. "You don't think it would make it sound more plausible if I really took the vinaigrette?" she added, a little wistfully.

"It would spoil everything," I replied, firmly, as I reached for the vinaigrette and locked it carefully in my desk.

She was silent for a moment, and her glance fell on the carpet. That, however, did not worry me. It was nailed down.

"Well, good-bye," she said.

"*Au revoir*," I replied. "I am meeting Mortimer at six-thirty to-morrow. You may expect us round at your house at about eight."

MORTIMER was punctual at the tryst next morning. When I reached the tenth tee he was already there. We exchanged a brief greeting and I handed him a driver, outlined the essentials of grip and swing, and bade him go to it.

"It seems a simple game," he said, as he took his stance. "You're sure it's fair to have the ball sitting up on top of a young sand-hill like this?"

"Perfectly fair."

"I mean, I don't want to be coddled because I'm a beginner."

"The ball is always teed up for the drive," I assured him.

"Oh, well, if you say so. But it seems to me to take all the element of sport out of the game. Where do I hit it?"

"Oh, straight ahead."

"But isn't it dangerous? I mean, suppose I smash a window in that house over there?"

He indicated a charming bijou residence some five hundred yards down the fairway.

"In that case," I replied, "the owner comes out in his pyjamas and offers you the choice between some nuts and a cigar."

He seemed reassured, and began to address the ball. Then he paused again.

"Isn't there something you say before you start?" he asked. "'Five,' or something?"

"You may say 'Fore!' if it makes you feel any easier. But it isn't necessary."

"If I am going to learn this silly game," said Mortimer, firmly, "I am going to learn it *right*. Fore!"

I watched him curiously. I never put a club into the hand of a beginner without something of the feeling of the sculptor who surveys a mass of shapeless clay. I experience the emotions of a creator. Here, I say to myself, is a semi-sentient being into whose soulless carcass I am breathing life. A moment before, he was, though technically living, a mere clod. A moment hence he will be a golfer.

While I was still occupied with these meditations Mortimer swung at the ball. The club, whizzing down, brushed the surface of the rubber sphere, toppling it off the tee and propelling it six inches with a slight slice on it.

"Damnation!" said Mortimer, unravelling himself.

I nodded approvingly. His drive had not been anything to write to the golfing journals about, but he was picking up the technique of the game.

"What happened then?"

I told him in a word.

"Your stance was wrong, and your grip was wrong, and you moved your head, and swayed your body, and took your eye off the ball, and pressed, and forgot to use your wrists, and swung back too fast, and let the hands get ahead of the club, and lost your balance, and omitted to pivot on the ball of the left foot, and bent your right knee."

He was silent for a moment.

"There is more in this pastime," he said, "than the casual observer would suspect."

I HAVE noticed, and I suppose other people have noticed, that in the golf education of every man there is a definite point at which he may be said to have crossed the dividing line—the Rubicon, as it were—that separates the golfer from the non-golfer. This moment comes immediately after his first good drive. In the ninety minutes in which I instructed Mortimer Sturgis that morning in the rudiments of the game, he made every variety of drive known to science; but it was not till we were about to leave that he made a good one.

A moment before he had surveyed his blistered hands with sombre disgust.

"It's no good," he said. "I shall never learn this beast of a game. And I don't want to either. It's only fit for lunatics. Where's the sense in it? Hitting a rotten little ball with a stick! If I want exercise, I'll take a stick and go and rattle it along the railings. There's something *in* that! Well, let's be getting along. No good wasting the whole morning out here."

"Try one more drive, and then we'll go."

"All right. If you like. No sense in it, though."

He teed up the ball, took a careless stance, and flicked moodily. There was a sharp crack, the ball shot off the tee, flew a hundred yards in a dead straight line never ten feet above the ground, soared another seventy yards in a graceful arc, struck the turf, rolled, and came to rest within easy mashie distance of the green.

"Splendid!" I cried.

The man seemed stunned. He blinked.

"How did that happen?"

I told him very simply.

"Your stance was right, and your grip was right, and you kept your head still, and didn't sway your body, and never took your eye off the ball, and slowed back, and let the arms come well through, and rolled the wrists, and let the club-head lead, and kept your balance, and pivoted on the ball of the left foot, and didn't duck the right knee."

"I see," he said. "Yes, I thought that must be it."

"Now let's go home."

"Wait a minute. I just want to remember what I did while it's fresh in my mind. Let me see, this was the way I stood. Or was it more like this? No, like this." He turned to me, beaming. "What a great idea it was, my taking up golf! It's all nonsense what you read in the comic papers about people foozling all over the place and breaking clubs and all that. You've only to exercise a little reasonable care. And what a corking game it is! Nothing like it in the world! I wonder if Betty is up yet. I must go round and show her how I did that drive. A perfect swing, with every ounce of weight, wrist, and muscle behind it. I meant to keep it a secret from the dear girl till I had really learned, but of course I *have* learned now. Let's go round and rout her out."

He had given me my cue. I put my hand on his shoulder and spoke sorrowfully.

"Mortimer, my boy, I fear I have bad news for you."

"Slow back—keep the head—— What's that? Bad news?"

"About Betty."

"About Betty? What about her? Don't sway the body—keep the eye on the——"

"Prepare yourself for a shock, my boy. Yesterday afternoon Betty called to see me. When she had gone I found that she had stolen my silver matchbox."

"Stolen your matchbox?"

"Stolen my matchbox!"

"Oh, well, I dare say there were faults on both sides," said Mortimer. "Tell me if I sway my body this time."

"You don't grasp what I have said! Do you realize that Betty, the girl you are going to marry, is a kleptomaniac?"

"A kleptomaniac!"

"That is the only possible explanation. Think what this means, my boy. Think how you will feel every time your wife says she is going out to do a little shopping! Think of yourself, left alone at home, watching the clock, saying to yourself, 'Now she is lifting a pair of silk stockings!' 'Now she is hiding gloves in her umbrella!' 'Just about this moment she is getting away with a pearl necklace!'"

"Would she do that?"

"She would! She could not help herself. Or, rather, she could not refrain from helping herself. How about it, my boy?"

"It only draws us closer together," he said.

I was touched, I own. My scheme had failed, but it had proved Mortimer Sturgis

to be of pure gold. He stood gazing down the fairway, wrapped in thought.

"By the way," he said, meditatively, "I wonder if the dear girl ever goes to any of those sales—those auction-sales, you know, where you're allowed to inspect the things the day before? They often have some pretty decent vases."

He broke off and fell into a reverie.

FROM this point onward Mortimer Sturgis proved the truth of what I said to you about the perils of taking up golf at an advanced age. A lifetime of observing my fellow-creatures has convinced me that Nature intended us all to be golfers. In every human being the germ of golf is implanted at birth, and suppression causes it to grow and grow till—it may be at forty, fifty, sixty—it suddenly bursts its bonds and sweeps over the victim like a tidal wave. The wise man, who begins to play in childhood, is enabled to let the poison exude gradually from his system, with no harmful results. But a man like Mortimer Sturgis, with thirty-eight golfless years behind him, is swept off his feet. He is carried away. He loses all sense of proportion. He is like the fly that happens to be sitting on the wall of the dam just when the crack comes.

Mortimer Sturgis gave himself up without a struggle to an orgy of golf such as I have never witnessed in any man. Within two days of that first lesson he had accumulated a collection of clubs large enough to have enabled him to open a shop: and he went on buying them at the rate of two and three a day. On Sundays, when it was impossible to buy clubs, he was like a lost spirit. True, he would do his regular four rounds on the day of rest, but he never felt happy. The thought, as he sliced into the rough, that the patent wooden-faced cleek which he intended to purchase next morning might have made all the difference, completely spoiled his enjoyment.

I remember him calling me up on the telephone at three o'clock one morning to tell me that he had solved the problem of putting. He intended in future, he said, to use a croquet mallet, and he wondered that no one had ever thought of it before. The sound of his broken groan when I informed him that croquet mallets were against the rules haunted me for days.

His golf library kept pace with his collection of clubs. He bought all the standard works, subscribed to all the golfing papers, and, when he came across a paragraph in a magazine to the effect that Mr. Hutchings, an ex-amateur champion, did not begin to play till he was past forty, and that his opponent in the final, Mr. S. H. Fry, had never held a club till his thirty-fifth year, he had it engraved on vellum and framed and hung up beside his shaving-mirror.

AND Betty, meanwhile? She, poor child, stared down the years into a bleak future, in which she saw herself parted for ever from the man she loved, and the golf-widow of another for whom—even when he won a medal for lowest net at a weekly handicap with a score of a hundred and three minus twenty-four—she could feel nothing warmer than respect. Those were dreary days for Betty. We three—she and I and Eddie Denton—often talked over Mortimer's strange obsession. Denton said that, except that Mortimer had not come out in pink spots, his symptoms were almost identical with those of the dreaded *mongo-mongo*, the scourge of the West African hinterland. Poor Denton! He had already booked his passage for Africa, and spent hours looking in the atlas for good deserts.

In every fever of human affairs there comes at last the crisis. We may emerge from it healed or we may plunge into still deeper depths of soul-sickness: but always the crisis comes. I was privileged to be present when it came in the affairs of Mortimer Sturgis and Betty Weston.

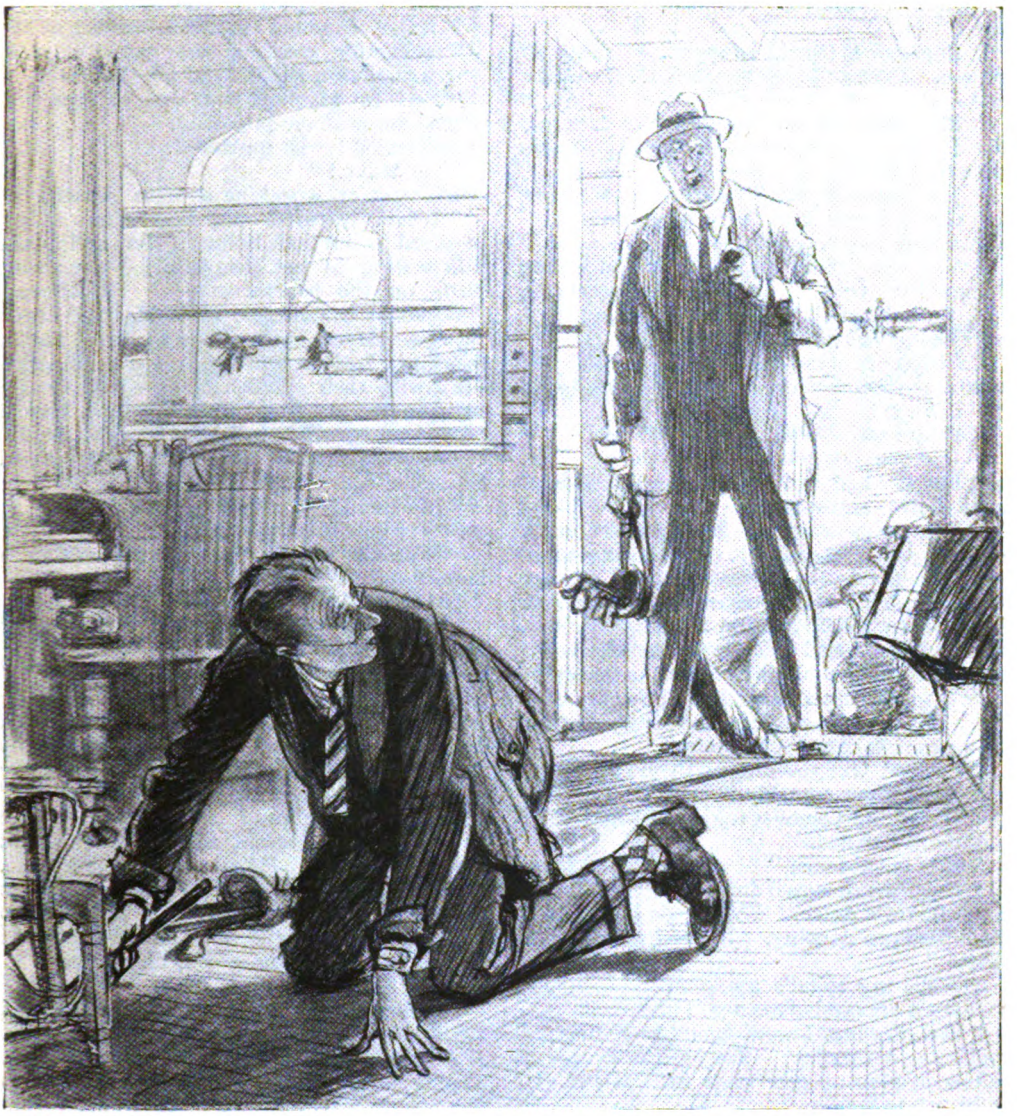
I had gone into the club-house one afternoon at an hour when it is usually empty, and the first thing I saw, as I entered the main room, which looks out on the ninth green, was Mortimer. He was grovelling on the floor, and I confess that, when I caught sight of him, my heart stood still. I feared that his reason, sapped by dissipation, had given way. I knew that for weeks, day in and day out, the niblick had hardly ever been out of his hand, and no constitution can stand that.

He looked up as he heard my footstep.

"Hallo," he said. "Can you see a ball anywhere?"

"A ball?" I backed away, reaching for the door-handle. "My dear boy," I said, soothingly, "you have made a mistake. Quite a natural mistake. One anybody would have made. But, as a matter of fact, this is the club-house. The links are outside there. Why not come away with me very quietly and let us see if we can't find some balls on the links? If you will wait here a moment, I will call up Doctor Smithson. He was telling me only this morning that he wanted a good spell of ball-hunting to put him in shape. You don't mind if he joins us?"

"It was a Silver King with my initials on it," Mortimer went on, not heeding me. "I got on the ninth green in eleven with a nice mashie-niblick, but my approach putt was a little too strong. It came in through that window."



"Mortimer looked up. 'Can you see a ball anywhere?' he said. 'My approach putt was a little too strong. It came in through that window.'"

I perceived for the first time that one of the windows facing the course was broken, and my relief was great. I went down on my knees and helped him in his search. We ran the ball to earth finally inside the piano.

"What's the local rule?" inquired Mortimer. "Must I play it where it lies, or may I tee up and lose a stroke? If I have to play it where it lies, I suppose a niblick would be the club?"

It was at this moment that Betty came in. One glance at her pale, set face told me that there was to be a scene, and I would have retired, but that she was between me and the door.

"Hallo, dear," said Mortimer, greeting her with a friendly waggle of his niblick. "I'm bunkered in the piano. My approach putt was a little strong, and I over-ran the green."

"Mortimer," said the girl, tensely, "I want to ask you one question."

"Yes, dear? I wish, darling, you could have seen my drive at the eighth just now. It was a pip!"

Betty looked at him steadily.

"Are we engaged," she said, "or are we not?"

"Engaged? Oh, to be married? Why, of course. I tried the open stance for a change, and——"

"This morning you promised to take me for a ride. You never appeared. Where were you?"

"Just playing golf."

"Golf! I'm sick of the very name!"

A spasm shook Mortimer.

"You mustn't let people hear you saying things like that!" he said. "I somehow felt, the moment I began my up-swing, that everything was going to be all right. I——"

"I'll give you one more chance. Will you take me for a drive in your car this evening?"

"I can't."

"Why not? What are you doing?"

"Just playing golf!"

"I'm tired of being neglected like this!" cried Betty, stamping her foot. Poor girl, I saw her point of view. It was bad enough for her being engaged to the wrong man, without having him treat her as a mere acquaintance. Her conscience fighting with her love for Eddie Denton had kept her true to Mortimer, and Mortimer accepted the sacrifice with an absent-minded carelessness which would have been galling to any girl. "We might just as well not be engaged at all. You never take me anywhere."

"I asked you to come with me to watch the Open Championship."

"Why don't you ever take me to dances?"

"I can't dance."

"You could learn."

"But I'm not sure if dancing is a good thing for a fellow's game. You never hear of any first-class pro dancing. James Braid doesn't dance."

"Well, my mind's made up. Mortimer, you must choose between golf and me."

"But, darling, I went round in a hundred and one yesterday. You can't expect a fellow to give up golf when he's at the top of his game."

"Very well. I have nothing more to say. Our engagement is at an end."

"Don't throw me over, Betty," pleaded Mortimer, and there was that in his voice which cut me to the heart. "You'll make me so miserable. And, when I'm miserable, I always slice my approach shots."

Betty Weston drew herself up. Her face was hard.

"Here is your ring!" she said, and swept from the room.

FOR a moment after she had gone Mortimer remained very still, looking at the glistening circle in his hand. I stole across the room and patted his shoulder.

"Bear up, my boy, bear up!" I said.

He looked at me piteously.

"Stymied!" he muttered.

"Be brave!"

He went on, speaking as if to himself.

"I had pictured—ah, how often I had pictured!—our little home! Hers and mine! She sewing in her arm-chair, I practising putts on the hearthrug——" He choked. "While in the corner, little Harry Vardon Sturgis played with little J. H. Taylor Sturgis. And round the room—reading, busy with their childish tasks—little George Duncan Sturgis, Abe Mitchell Sturgis, Harold Hilton Sturgis, Edward Ray Sturgis, Horace Hutchinson Sturgis, and little James Braid Sturgis."

"My boy! My boy!" I cried.

"What's the matter?"

"Weren't you giving yourself rather a large family?"

He shook his head moodily.

"Was I?" he said, dully. "I don't know. What's bogey?"

There was a silence.

"And yet——" he said, at last, in a low voice. He paused. An odd, bright look had come into his eyes. He seemed suddenly to be himself again, the old, happy Mortimer Sturgis I had known so well. "And yet," he said, "who knows? Perhaps it is all for the best. They might all have turned out tennis-players!" He raised his niblick again, his face aglow. "Playing thirteen!" he said. "I think the game here would be to chip out through the door and work round the club-house to the green, don't you?"

Little remains to be told. Betty and Eddie have been happily married for years. Mortimer's handicap is now down to eighteen, and he is improving all the time. He was not present at the wedding, being unavoidably detained by a medal tournament: but, if you turn up the files and look at the list of presents, which were both numerous and costly, you will see—somewhere in the middle of the column, the words:—

STURGIS, J. MORTIMER.

Two dozen Silver King Golf-balls and one patent Sturgis Aluminium Self-Adjusting, Self-Compensating Putting-Cleek.

"The Moonlight Sonata"

and how to play it

by

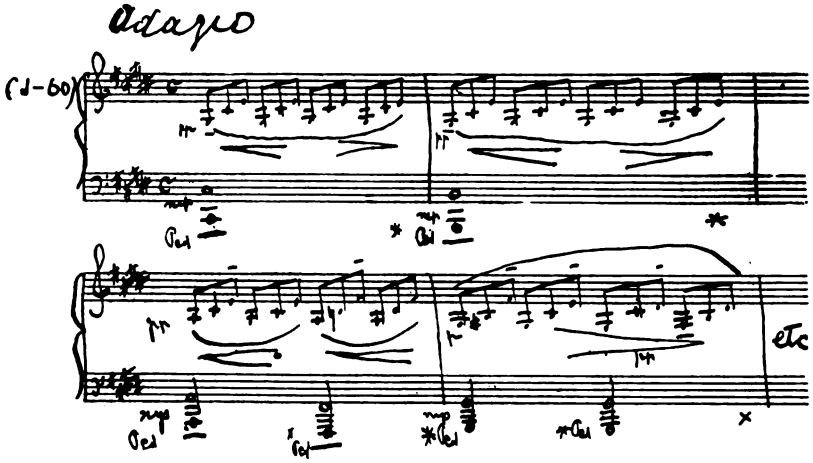
MARK HAMBOURG

I HAVE often been asked which, in my experience, I have found to be the most popular of the pianoforte works of Beethoven with the general concert public. I have no doubt that it is the Sonata in C sharp minor, commonly called the "Moonlight Sonata," that is the most universally beloved by all sorts and conditions of people, and it may therefore be of special interest to give here a few facts concerning the history of this noble work, together with my views for the interpretation of the first movement, from which the Sonata derives its title. The moment is opportune, for the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Beethoven has recently been celebrated.

The Sonata in C sharp minor, which was entitled by Beethoven himself "Quasi una Fantasia," was one of two sonatas written in the year 1801 and published in March, 1802, and forming together Opus 27. These years of 1801 and 1802 were of great creative activity on the part of Beethoven, and his works produced during this time belong to what is generally classified as the Master's second period. Grove says that the Sonata in C sharp minor was dedicated to the Contessa Gulietta Guicciardi, and much romance has been invented on this score. But the lady herself rather discounts this romance by recounting how Beethoven gave her the Rondo in G, and then, wanting to dedicate something to the Princess Lichnowsky, he took the Rondo away and gave the Contessa the "Moonlight Sonata" in its place. In my own edition of the Sonata, which is an old one published by Hallberger in Stuttgart in 1858, and edited by Moscheles, the pianist, a personal friend of Beethoven, it is stated to be dedicated to the Princess of Liechtenstein. The title, "The Moonlight," was supposed to have been given to the Sonata by Rellstab, a celebrated contemporary musical critic, who compared the first movement to a moonlight scene on the Lake of Lucerne. But it may also have received the name from a publisher who, after the custom of publishers, christened several of Beethoven's sonatas by various

BEETHOVEN.

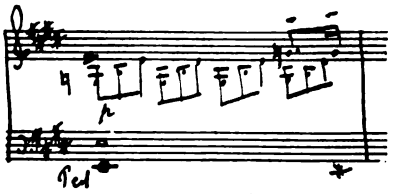
THIS PORTRAIT HAS NOT BEFORE APPEARED IN THIS COUNTRY.



Example No. 1, bars 1–4.

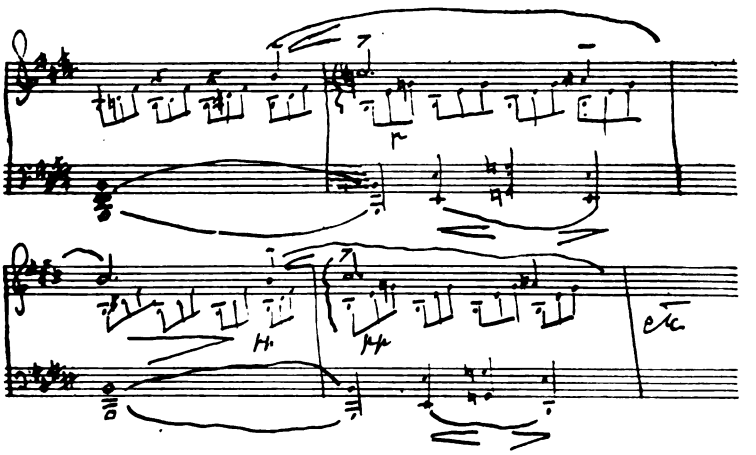
titles in order to make them more popular with the public (such as the " Pathétique," " Pastorale," " Les Adieux, L'Absence, Le Retour," etc.). I myself think the title of " Moonlight " not inappropriate to the spirit of the first movement of the C sharp minor Sonata, which reflects the romantic atmosphere and mysterious light and shade connected with the presence of the moon. But certainly the last movement has nothing to do with moonlight, but represents a great storm of emotion, when all is cloud, wind, and fury.

The Sonata in C sharp minor was a great favourite from the moment of its publication, and Beethoven jokingly even pretended to be annoyed about it, as he considered many of his other sonatas to be finer works musically; but still the " Moonlight Sonata " remains the popular favourite. Probably the fact that, technically, the lovely slow movement with which it commences is well within the reach of very moderate performers on the pianoforte may help to account for its extreme popularity over its fellows, since so many amateurs are able to derive pleasure from their own rendering of it. Beethoven wrote thirty-two sonatas in all, of which certainly nearly half are still as beloved and admired as ever they were, and continue to form an absolutely essential part of the repertoire of every pianist. He brought the sonata form to its highest perfection, and, having found the models of his predecessors too stilted and formal for the wider expression of his thoughts, he made innovations of what in those days were considered the most daring kind, and improved upon the forms he found. Like all original men of genius, he could not tolerate being fettered by conventions, and his mighty spirit soared untrammelled. The " Moonlight Sonata " is one of Beethoven's most original compositions of the so-called second period of his works, and in it he shows his freedom of thought by commencing the Sonata with an adagio movement which is not in sonata form, and which was at the time an entire innovation. In fact, the whole work is a precursor of the modern sonata. According to Beethoven's own directions the three movements were to be played straight through to the end without a break. He puts " Attacca subito il sequente " after each movement, showing that the three movements were designed to represent a continuous thread of thought running throughout the whole work. This unusual and free treatment of the Sonata's structure has imparted to it a modernity and freshness which ensure it an everlasting place in the literature of the pianoforte.



Example No. 2, bar 10.

The first movement of the " Moonlight Sonata " consists of a haunting and beautiful melody, full of romance and pathos, floating on a continuous stream of undulating harmony. The interpretation of it should be of the highest imagination, glowing with a quiet radiance of fantasy and feeling. The tone employed must be warm and melting in quality, imparting at the same time the mysterious resignation and the vague unrest of the music's atmosphere The opening five bars should be played in a manner to convey a kind of rhythmical stream to the triplet figures, and thus create an impression as of a continuously undulating background for the



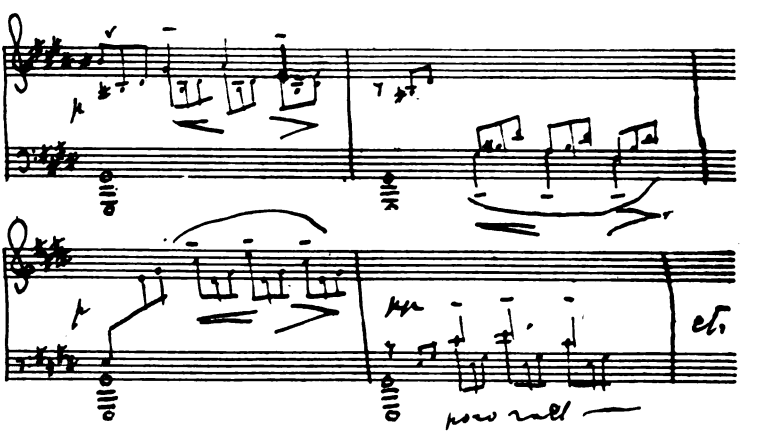
Example No. 3, bars 15–18.

melody which is presently to start. The octaves in the bass should be played somewhat louder than the triplet figure in the right hand, so as to produce the requisite depth of tone, though the volume of sound should not overstep the bounds of "piano" (*p*).—*Ex. No.* 1, *bars* 1–4.

The melody is introduced in the fifth bar, and must give the idea of floating on the accompaniment. At the tenth bar there comes a change of harmony from the major into the minor key, and here the note G (the first G) in the right hand should be accentuated.—*Ex. No.* 2, *bar* 10.

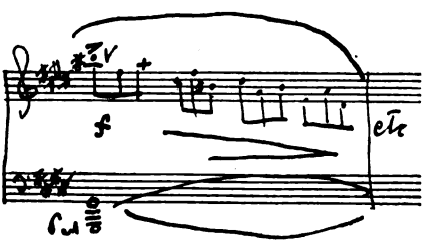
Proceeding onwards to the last quarter of the fifteenth bar and leading to the sixteenth, the melody adopts a more insistent temper, which may be rendered by emphasizing the notes B and C of the melody in the right hand, especially the C. In fact, this note C should be taken arpeggiato with the accompaniment underneath. It seems to me to represent a cry of unutterable heartache, a sudden longing which cannot be appeased. In the following bar, where these same notes of appeal appear again, they may be repeated pianissimo as a kind of echo.—*Ex. No.* 3, *bars* 15–18.

Coming to the twenty-fifth bar, there seems to be like a second voice appearing with a question in the treble and an answer in the bass, and then another question and the answer. In these bars the amount of tone can be somewhat increased and a plaintive expression imparted to the questioning phrases.—*Ex. No.* 4, *bars* 28–31.



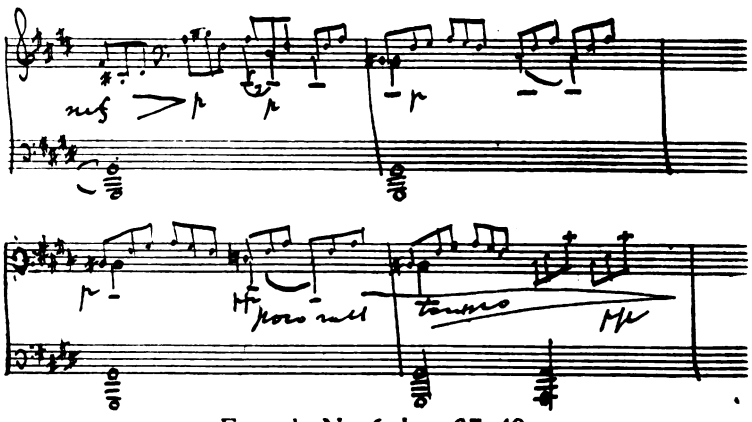
Example No. 4, bars 28–31.

A similar development is to be found in bars thirty and thirty-one. At bar thirty-two a storm begins to rise in the harmonies, and continues to increase with a gradually ascending crescendo of tone and accellerando of movement until it reaches its culminating point on the first note (B sharp) of the thirty-sixth bar, which should be brought out with considerable force.—*Ex. No.* 5, *bar* 36.



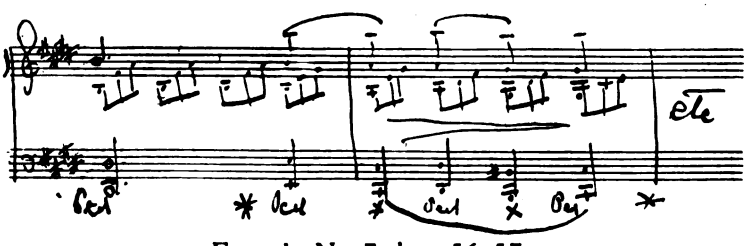
Example No. 5, bar 36.

From here onward the storm of emotion gradually diminishes in intensity until it returns with a rallentando in the fortieth and forty-first bars to the subdued spirit of the original atmosphere of the piece. It is of great importance during the gradual calming down of the stress of the music from bars thirty-seven to forty, that the melody which has embodied itself in the inner structures of the harmonies should be brought out thus.—*Ex. No.* 6, *bars* 37–40.



Example No. 6, bars 37–40.

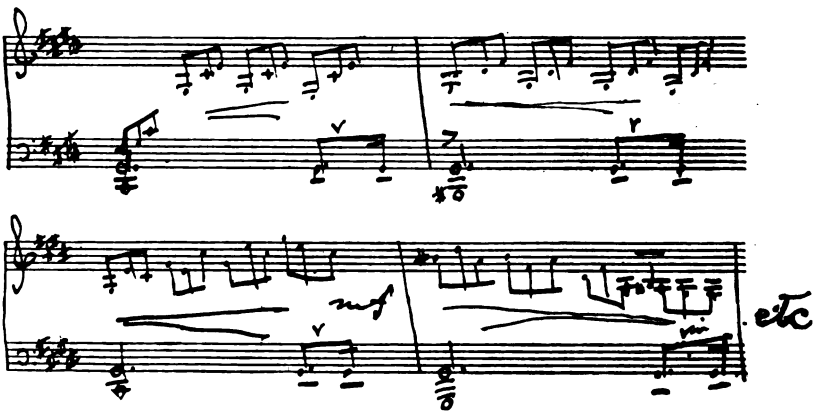
The next part of the movement resumes the opening melody, and then continues its course with some variation on the original, both in modulation of key and progression of passages. In the fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh bars the melody should be especially brought out and made apparent above the rhythmical figures of the accompaniment.—*Ex. No.* 7, *bars* 56–57.



Example No. 7, bars 56–57.

The movement now sinks towards its close, and from the sixtieth to the sixty-fourth bar the fateful notes in the left hand right down in the bass must resound, though not louder than mezzo forte, but still with an ominous emphasis which should pervade the last few bars of the movement.—*Ex. No.* 8, *bars* 60–63.

Again, from bars sixty-four to sixty-eight, these deep bass notes should speak out like the ringing of a knell of doom, but this time, though equally distinct as before, they should be given as soft as possible, like an echo of the former ones. The movement is thus brought to a conclusion in an atmosphere of melancholy tinged with vague foreboding.



Example No. 8, bars 60–63.

Wine of Sensation

by L·J·BEESTON

ILLUSTRATED BY E·PRATER

"LANDLORD," said Garman, finishing his bottle of claret, "I believe that I passed in my car, two miles north of here, that lonely house on a hill-top where an old man was brutally murdered a week ago."

The landlord of the Nine Bells, who had looked in to see if his visitor was enjoying his dinner, set his face to a grave expression.

"You mean the crime at Windy Oaks?" said he. "Yes, you would pass the place, coming that way. 'Twas terrible. Mr. Tracer was well known about here, sir. They found him in his bedroom one morning, cruelly battered, dead as that salmon in the glass case on the wall."

"A forceful simile," murmured the middle-aged, robustly-built guest, feeling for a cigar. "A shocking affair, landlord, and still not cleared up?"

"Nothin' material done. All we hear is that the police are looking for a man in a brown suit: a man between thirty and forty, with black hair. That don't amount to much—lacking further particulars. Such a man was seen near the house on the night of the murder."

"Well, I hope they get him," said Garman, rising.

"Strange enough," went on the landlord of the inn, rubbing his blue chin up the wrong way, "the very last time I saw Mr. Tracer was in this 'ouse, taking his dinner in this very room. A square-built man, sir, with a blue reefer-cut coat, brown beard turning to yellow, and gold spectacles. I little thought——"

"Well, I must be off," interrupted Garman, preparing to pay. "I shall have to push my little car along to get to town by nine o'clock. And there's a moaning sou'-west wind about that may mean rain."

Garman left the cosy inn a minute later. Its cheerful light showed his car waiting by the roadside. Garman was driving it himself. After bestowing a tip or two he got in, buttoned up well, and glided off into the absolutely dark night. There was no moon, the stars were obscured, and the only sound to be heard was the whining plaint of the wind to the telegraph-wires.

Garman had scarcely got going, and the Nine Bells was about fifty yards behind, when a figure leaped into the middle of the road and waved its arms for him to stop. The car carried good lamps for its size, and in the searching glare Garman, as he applied his brakes, saw that the interrupter of his progress was a man of about thirty-seven, who was wearing a brown suit.

A voice, husky with entreaty, called to him—"If you are going to London, sir, or only a part of the way, I beg of you to give me a lift."

The car came to a stop. The man's face looked deathly white in the lamps' glare.

Garman was a man of swift consideration. He fixed a penetrative gaze upon the man, and he reflected. He did not like that brown suit and those thirty-seven years. But Garman was a man without fear, and very well able to take care of himself. Also he never jumped to a conclusion.

"What's the trouble?" he inquired, calmly.

"I am stranded here," answered the other, with beseeching. "No train stops here for hours, and I want to get to London at the earliest moment. I cannot say how grateful I should be——"

"All right; get in," invited Garman, curtly.

With a hurried outburst of thanks the stranger climbed into the car and took the only other seat—on Garman's left.

Away hummed the automobile, skimming beautifully to the crest of a long ascent. The white road streamed under the bonnet; sheer pace gave a whistle to the wind, and a raw, chilling breath.

Said Garman to himself as he gripped the wheel: "Now I wonder who the devil this fellow is? He is very anxious to get away from here; but I wouldn't think anything of that if he was wearing a different-coloured coat. Still, the situation is not without interest. If he tries any hanky-panky trick on me I shall break his jaw. Of course, he may not be *that* fellow. He wouldn't be found so near the spot. But if he is——"

Garman suddenly checked the conjecture. A soft whistle crept to his lips. Some startling idea had darted like an electric current through his mind. He muttered to himself: "In that case—in that case, what would they say to it at the Club? Why—why—good heavens, what a point to score!

So strange and powerful was the idea that had presented itself to Garman that it imparted an almost literal flash to his eyes. In the grip of it he stared straight ahead, thinking rapidly, guiding the car subconsciously. He did not see the uneasy glances which his companion kept bestowing upon him.

After they had covered seven miles Garman decided to act. His first move was to bring the car to a standstill. They were then in a partly-sunken road, heavy and black with mud, and the twisted roots of trees came out on the bank like monstrous serpents.

"Now, then, answer short and sharp!" commanded Garman. "Who are you?"

The other winced at the demand, and put out a hand towards the door. "You take a strange tone with me," he replied.

"I do. And I have a reason. You are the man looked for in the Tracer murder."

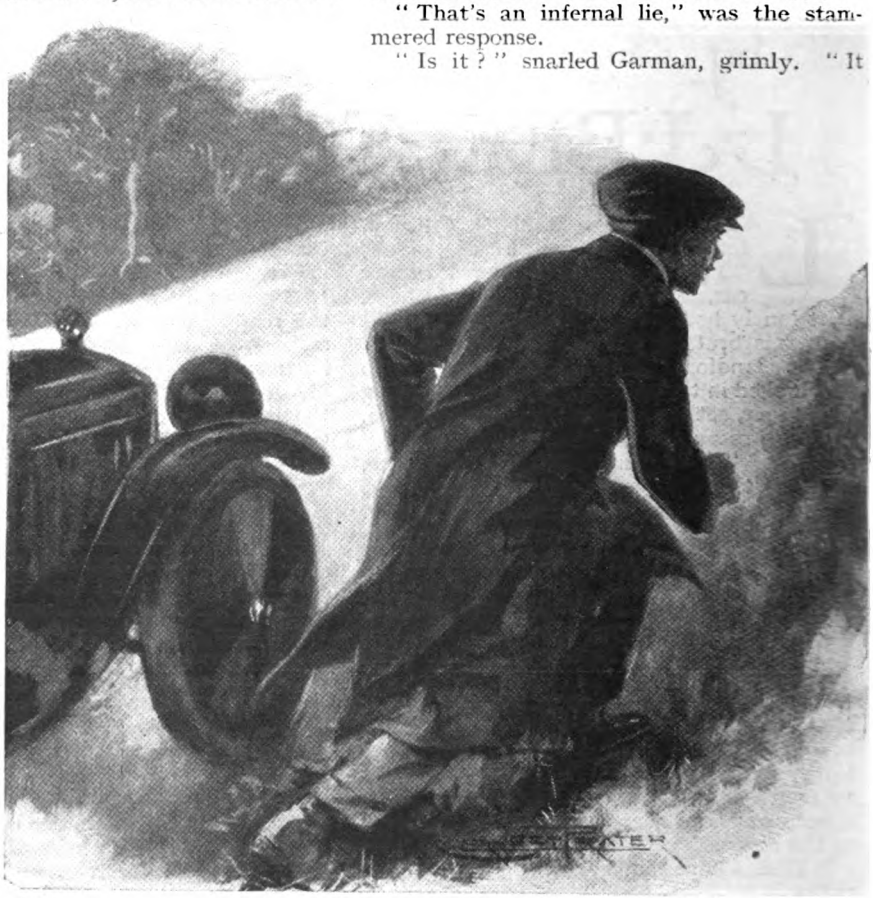
"That's an infernal lie," was the stammered response.

"Is it?" snarled Garman, grimly. "It is up to you to prove your word. You will not object?"

"What do you mean?"

"That we stop at the next police-station, where you can answer a few questions."

"You can stop at all of them if you choose," sneered the other.



"Garman restarted the car, but before it had travelled a yard his companion vaulted clean over the side of it. Garman lost a second or two, then was after him."

"One will be enough."

As he spoke, Garman restarted the car; but before it had travelled a yard his companion vaulted clean over the side of it. Garman lost a second or two, then was after him. The pursuit was of brief duration, for the foremost runner suddenly stopped as if a pistol ball had pierced his heart.

"Oh, my God! He's there—again—there!" he cried in a voice hoarse and broken by terror.

A thrill quivered over even Garman's well-strung nerves. He stared intently in the direction to which the other pointed. In the dark wall of the night all he could perceive—and that very faintly—was a gnarled oak tree with its writhing limbs, on which the unfallen brown and withered leaves made a husky sound in the wind.

"Who's there? What the devil do you mean?" cried Garman, as he grasped the fugitive by the shoulder.

"*He!*" was the gasped response. "I saw the flash of his gold spectacles. There—there! He's got on the same reefer coat! He has taken his hands from his pockets! Keep him off! He isn't dead! Can't be! I have seen him like that twice since. He's alive! keep him away!"

The voice rose almost to a scream, sending an icy shiver the length of Garman's spine. With a single action he spun the man round and pushed him by main strength into the car, where he collapsed. Garman started again, and he flung a queer and apprehensive glance towards the oak tree as he passed it.

The car covered several miles before either man spoke. Presently Garman broke the silence between them.

"We are drawing near town," said he, slowing up that he might be heard properly. "I suppose you will no longer deny that you are the man wanted by the police for the murder of Mr. Tracer of Windy Oaks?"

"My story isn't a matter for their ears," answered the other. "That is what I shrink from. There is more in it than I dare tell the police. No one would understand—but a friend; and where am I to find one—now?"

His teeth chattered together, for the speed-created half-gale of wind had penetrated to his bones.

"Do you deny that you murdered Mr. Tracer?" demanded Garman.

"It is that word 'murder' that I take exception to."

"That you killed him, then?"

"Suppose I say that I did?"

"Then I should offer you a chance."

"*You?* How is that possible?"

"I cannot explain here and now. You shall know in an hour's time."

"You want me to do something?"

"Perhaps I do, and perhaps I don't."

"It must be something devilish, then."

"You can refuse, if you choose. What is your name?"

"Milt."

"All right, Milt. Now you know as well as I do that if you get into the police clutch you are done for. And if you try to leave me again, without my permission, I will hand you over as sure as I live. I am twice as strong as you are, and twice as determined. Will you trust yourself to my hands? I repeat—I mean to offer you a chance. Now will you be placable or not?"

The other was silent. He looked at Garman in a queer and furtive manner.

"Confound you! What are you thinking about?" asked Garman.

"I was thinking that you have something ugly at the back of your head," was the slow and resentful answer.

"Very well; it's the police and the end for you," snarled Garman, savagely.

"No! I'll chance it," replied Milt, with abrupt vehemence. "I am in your power, and I'll keep quiet."

Garman nodded, muttered something unintelligible, and lengthened out the speed. In a few minutes a faint glow in the sky showed that the strange ride was coming to a finish.

FIFTY-FIVE minutes later two men turned out from Regent Street into Beak Street. The elder had tucked his arm into the other's, and they walked along in that old-fashioned way, as if they were the best of pals, though a close observer could have detected the fact that one man was in reality preventing a possible desire to bolt on the part of his companion.

As the hour was nine o'clock the big arteries of the West-end had absorbed most of the life of the streets, and the narrow thoroughfares this side of Regent Street were almost deserted. A thin veil of rain had turned the dust to a clayey paste; refuse from the small, mean shops had been swept into the gutters; iron shutters were up and dingy blinds drawn.

Suddenly the older man halted. "This is our destination," he announced.

He had stopped before a low shop with an embayed Georgian front, which bore the name, "Alexander Diarmid, Cigar Merchant."

There was a shabby side door, and to the lock of it he applied a key. A narrow and common little passage was disclosed, covered with a cheap linoleum, and the yellow paper on the walls was an insult to an intelligent gaze. At the end of this mean hallway ascended a long flight of stairs, lighted at the foot by the naked flame of a gas-jet in a wire guard.

"This way, Milt," said the older man, and still holding the other lightly by the arm he climbed the ladder-like staircase. As they drew near to the door at the top, a voice was heard speaking in a monotonous accent, as though reading. As Garman rapped seven times on the door the voice stopped. He then knocked four times, paused, then gave two more raps.

A clear voice called "Enter!"

AS Garman opened the door he felt his companion shrink back, but he was prepared for that, and grasping him by the back of the neck, he hurled him forward with violence.

Recovering his balance, Milt looked round. In a long room about a dozen men were seated, and one standing at the head of a table, with a paper in his hand. Each man had a strip of black cloth across his eyes, which had been adjusted when Garman knocked, and each was in evening dress.

He who had been speaking, after a glance at the interrupters, continued: "I have to confirm the secession of Lord Mountcarres. In the matter of the Rochfort Cobras he thinks we stepped beyond the limits of our cult. He resigns, therefore.

"I have to report three new applications for membership. The greatest care must be exercised. One is supported by Dr. Yeatman, not present. Another by Mr. Clark Anstey, present. The third by Professor Hungars, abroad. These gentlemen know the rules of membership. As I say, great care is demanded. We all remember the affair of the Canaris Mummy, when the weak nerves of a candidate nearly burst the Club to pieces.

"With regret I have to state that the Club's address may have to be changed once more. An absolute secrecy is hard to maintain; a rumour has been spread——"

The monotonous voice continued, but was no longer listened to by Milt. From the masked face of the speaker and his audience his eyes travelled round the room—uneasily, stealthily travelled. Here was luxury. The Persian rugs upon the floor were worth a fortune. It was a large room of grotesque faces. They stared—a grimacing multitude from great spreads of canvas upon the walls; they grinned from the painted ceiling; they glared from the carven bodies of squat monsters of Chinese and Indian fashioning. Along the length of a table in the middle of the room stretched an immense dragon of brass covered with burnished scales. A powerful electric light glowed in the jaws of this beast, and sent two slanting green rays from its eyeballs.

At a touch upon his arm Milt turned and saw Garman still by his side. Both men were standing by the door, and in shadow.

"I will tell you where you are," whispered Garman. "This is one of the least known and most exclusive clubs in London, and one of the most expensive. It is called 'The Sensation Club.' Are you listening?"

"What do they do here?" muttered Milt, wetting his lips.

"Here we worship the cult of the Sensational. Here we drink the heady wine of sheer excitement."

Milt gulped, and Garman tightened his hold upon his arm.

"Who are these men?" inquired Milt, huskily.

"Their names would astonish you; with that you must be satisfied. Most of them have run the gamut of all the thrills that life offers to the lover of them; and that is why they are here, why they are members of this association whose first duty is to provide breath-stopping, heart-stopping excitement. There is no other club in the world where such fare is to be found."

"Good God!" murmured Milt, rolling dilated eyes.

" You heard the President speak of three new aspirants for membership. Probably not one of them will be successful."

" Why not ? "

" Because he must provide a new Sensation ; or, failing that, must submit himself to one. I tell you that this is no place for unstrung nerves."

" What have you brought me here for ? "

" That you shall know at once. Come forward ! "

The President had completed his remarks, and now, for the first time since their entry, all eyes sought Garman and the stranger with him. And the sight of them, glittering behind the slits in the half-masks, boring into him, affected Milt like stabs from the electric needle.

" I have to request that someone will be so good as to keep between my charge here and the door," commenced Garman, urbanely. He spoke well ; he " had the floor," and it was evident that he meant to make the most of his opportunity.

" Mr. President and gentlemen," he continued, " it is my good fortune to introduce to-night one of those adventures in pure sensation which are the essence of this Club. I assume that we have all heard of the crime at Windy Oaks, in which a Mr. Tracer was done to death. Gentlemen, I have no doubt that the criminal is this man whom I have brought here. Of his own free will he comes ; and, on his behalf, I claim for him the privileges of The Sensation Club."

The President rested his finger-ends on the table before him. " That is to be seen," said he, gravely. " Explain further."

GARMAN went on : " This evening I dined at the inn called the Nine Bells, which is two miles north of Windy Oaks. The landlord spoke unctuously of the crime, describing the dead man, whom he knew, and that Unknown who is wanted by the police. When I came away it was quite dark. At a lonely spot in the road my car was stopped by our friend here, who implored me, in tones of very real fear and distress, to give him a lift along the London road. His manner, and his appearance—which is that of the wanted man—created my suspicion. When I came to demand of him the truth, he jumped from the car and bolted. But he was held up in a remarkable manner. In the gloom of a sunken road he saw—or shall we say that he fancied that he saw ?—the form of his victim. In his agony he described it to me—a man in a blue reefer coat, with gold spectacles ; a square-built man with a brown beard changing to yellow. These were the words used by the landlord of the inn, and they were practically repeated by our rather terrible guest here. More, he declared that he had seen that unsubstantial presence twice before since the act—his act—of foul murder. This we may or may not believe ; but in a convulsion of terror, an access of mortal fear, he practically admitted the deed. My first impulse was to place him in the hands of the police ; my second, to bring him here. He wishes to know what you will do with him ; his plea is for the protection of the Club. That is all, gentlemen. I have played my part. I have brought you a grim guest. Mr. President, you will decide."

The moment Garman ceased talking an excited babel of voices arose. Milt turned his wild eyes upon the crowd, but he failed to catch what was being said. Twice he looked behind him to the door, but a big man was on guard there.

Suddenly the President made a sign for silence. As the excited talk died down the words " Hungars " and " bacillus " became audible.

" Certainly Professor Hungars's queer discovery has never been put to a decisive test," said the President, calmly. " And as it seems to be the most popular suggestion, we will put it to a practical application."

While speaking he unlocked a drawer in the long table. A moment later a tiny phial of blue glass, octagonal, was in his hand.

" A wine-glass," he requested, " half-filled with pure water."

He inserted the bare end of a match into the phial, and when he withdrew it there clung to it a drop of liquid. He held this over the wine-glass and gently shook off the drop into the water, which slowly changed to the colour of grass-green. Milt watched the proceedings with deeply-uneasy intentness. The red crept from his cheeks ; his eyes were haggard.

" You will drink the contents of that glass," was the harshly-uttered command.

" What devil's game are you playing ? " said Milt, huskily.

" Drink ! "

" Yes—perhaps—when I know what it is."

" It is your chance of your life," said the President, with iron sternness. " It will save you—at a price. What that price is you shall know. The liquid in this phial was sent to us by a member—Professor Hungars. It contains a germ obtained by him from a West Indian swamp. He claims that the effect of this germ in the human system is to produce, with a terrible swiftness, all the signs and appearance of advanced years. The tissues waste, the arteries harden, the eye loses its lustre, the skin yellows. So he states, and Professor Hungars is one of our foremost bacteriologists. You must now perceive the chance which we extend to you, Milt. The police are looking for a man—a

young man—between thirty and forty years of age. It is highly likely that this liquid offers you the power to baffle them."

"I see," said Milt, moistening his lips. "If they find an old man—shrunken, white-haired—ah, what ghouls you are! I will not touch it! By Heaven, I will not!"

"You will!"

"I swear I won't!"

"You have two minutes in which to make up your mind."

"An old man of me?" muttered Milt, huskily. "How old? Fifty? Sixty? More than that?"

"Probably much more. You know as much as we do. But I am not here to answer your questions. One of your two minutes has expired. I warn you that you are in a dangerous position."

"My soul! I can believe that," groaned the fugitive, casting a dazed and cowed look at the masked faces all turned upon him.

No one spoke. Milt breathed heavily; slowly he reached out a hand that shook with agitation. He took up the glass. Excited whispers arose. "He'll drink!" "No! He's afraid!" "And, by Heaven, he has reason to be!"

Milt lifted the glass to his lips; but at the last moment, when he seemed about to toss the liquid down his throat, he changed his mind, and with a shout of "Damn the lot of you!" he hurled the crystal to the floor, where it shivered to pieces.

Then he leaped to the window.

"Stop him!" roared everyone.

BUT there was no need. Milt had become abruptly paralysed. Clutching the dark curtains, his eyes a-glare, he was looking into the street as if he saw some unimaginable horror down there.

"There he is!" he gasped. "The fourth time! He is looking up at me! He is coming over—*he!* Bolt the door! For God's sake keep him out!"

There was a rush to the window. Garman was first. In the light of a street lamp, crossing the road, his gaze lifted steadily towards the window, they all saw a square-built man with a brownish-yellow beard, and wearing a blue reefer-cut coat, and the white light flashing on the lenses of his gold spectacles. They all saw that thing clearly, and its stone-like, bloodless face.

"That's Tracer," said Garman, pitching his voice low for control.

Milt spun round as if he had been cut with a whip. "That's a lie! Tracer's dead!" he snarled, his face convulsed.

"Perfectly true, and he is coming up here, presumably," said Garman.

That grim figure in the street was now so far below the window level as to be out of sight. A tense silence had gripped the occupants of the room. And then, as everyone listened in the most acute suspense, they heard the door downstairs open and close. Thirty seconds followed that ominous sound, but no other was heard.

Someone tried to scoff—"What are we getting scared about, anyhow?"

No one replied. Garman stepped to the door which opened upon the long steep staircase. He opened it softly, gave one look, then recoiled as if a pistol had been thrust into his throat.

"It's coming up!" he gasped.

Milt turned round, staggered, and fell upon his knees, with one hand grasping the table's edge. At the same moment a face, ashen-livid, appeared in the doorway. Its eyes were fixed upon the crouching man, and it advanced upon him!

"Keep him off! Keep him off!" screamed Milt, writhing.

But no one stirred. The bizarre figure approached the agonized Milt, slowly and stealthily. It flung out both its arms and gripped him by the throat! Milt uttered a frightful cry and closed with the terrible visitor. For a moment they rocked to and fro as if in a death clutch, and then——

Then Milt broke loose with a shout of laughter!

"Call it off, Yeatman!" said he. "Show the cards! You've introduced me all right, all right; and I reckon I've earned a membership to the Club!"

"I perfectly agree," said the visitor, with a chuckle. He swept off his beard, removed his spectacles, rubbed his cheeks effectively. He looked round upon the stupefied company. "A true sensation, gentlemen! Admit it!"

"Dr. Yeatman!" gasped every voice.

"Precisely and exactly," purred that beaming individual, "and one of yourselves. This is my friend, Mr. Milt, and he is my candidate for membership. Allow that he has proved himself a most suitable applicant! We worked this little stunt together. Only he and I were in it. I knew that Garman was to dine this evening at the Nine Bells, Windy Oaks, for he told me so. At my suggestion my friend Milt—whose remarkable powers of acting you must concede—passed himself off as the man looked for by the police. Garman was tricked absolutely. I felt certain that he would perceive, in the encounter, an opportunity to make a big hit at the Club. To bring to it the man all the country is talking about! What a chance! And Garman snapped at it; fairly ate it up. I ask his pardon. As for me—I became a suggestion of poor Mr. Tracer, whose cruel end, still a mystery, we all hope justice will avenge.

"That is the very simple story. Allow me

"'You will drink the contents of that glass!' was the harshly-uttered command."

to formally introduce my friend and candidate for membership of The Sensational Club. May I venture to predict his enrolment?"

"I think you may," said the President.

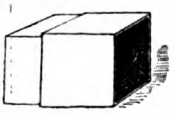
He had to shout to make himself heard above the din of applause; and he furtively passed a handkerchief over his forehead, which was beaded with perspiration.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E DUDENEY.

540.—A CUBE PARADOX.

I HAD two solid cubes of lead, one very slightly larger than the other, just as shown in the illustration.



Through one of them I cut a hole (without destroying the continuity of its four sides) so that the other cube could be passed right through it. On weighing them afterwards it was found that the larger cube was still the heavier of the two! How was this possible?

541.—FACTORY HANDS.

ALFRED, Ben, and Charles work in the same factory, but at different benches. Ben is twice as old as Charles, and Alfred is twice as old as Ben. Each has noticed that he is the youngest workman at his bench and that every man in the factory is a year older than the one on his left, Alfred, Ben, and Charles being on the extreme left of their particular benches. Oddly enough, the total of the ages at each bench is 285. How many men are there at each bench?

542.—THE GARDEN BED.

HERE is quite a simple little puzzle. A man has a triangular lawn of the proportions shown, and he wants to make the largest possible rectangular flower-bed without enclosing the tree. How is he to do it? This will serve to teach the uninitiated a simple rule that may prove useful on occasion. For example, it would equally apply to the case of a carpenter who had a triangular board and wished to cut out the largest possible rectangular table-top without including a bad knot in the wood.

543.—AN UNSOLVED ENIGMA.

A CORRESPONDENT sends me another old enigma to which the solution is unknown. I have not yet discovered any satisfactory answer, but I have no doubt it will interest my readers to try their wits at it:—

In jerkin short and nut-brown coat I live.
Pleasure to all, and pain to all, I give.
Quivers I have and pointed arrows too,
Cold is my dart and iron is my bow.
Nothing I send, yet many things I write,
I never go to war, yet always fight.
Nothing I eat, yet I am always full.
Poison from books, and sweets from flowers, I cull.
A spotted back I have and leathern scrip.
Black is my face and blubber is my lip.
No tears I shed, and yet I always weep.
Sleeping I wake and waking do I sleep.

544.—REVERSING THE DIGITS.

WHAT number, composed of nine figures, will, if multiplied by the number 123456789, give a product with 987654321 (in that order) in the last nine places to the right?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

535.—THE GUARDED CHESSBOARD.

HERE is the solution, with every square occupied or attacked, and only one piece, the bishop at KB6, unguarded by another piece. It was discovered by Major Chepmell, who is well known in the chess world.

536.—DIVIDING BY 37.

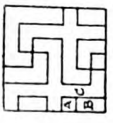
WRITE beneath the number successively, from right to left, the numbers 1, 10, 11, as follows:—

4	9	1	2	9	3	0	8	2	1	3
10	1	11	10	1	11	10	1	11	10	1

Now, regarding the lower figures as multipliers, add together all the products of 1 and 10 and deduct all the products by 11. This is the same as adding 13, 08, 29, and 49 together (99) and deducting eleven times 2 plus 3 plus 1 (66). The difference, 33, will be the remainder when the large number is divided by 37. Here is the key. If we divide 1, 10, 100, 1,000, etc., by 37 we get successively the remainders 1, 10, 26, but for convenience we deduct the 26 from 37 and call it *minus* 11. If you try 49,629,708,213 you will find the minus or negative total 165, or in excess of the positive 99. The difference is 66. Deduct 37 and you get 29. But as the result is minus, deduct it from 37 and you have 8 as correct answer. You can now find the method for other prime divisors. The cases of 7 and 13 are easy. In the former case you write 1, 3, 2 (1, 3, 2), 1, 3, 2, etc., from right to left, the bracketed numbers being minus. In the latter case, 1 (3, 4, 1), 3, 4, 1 (3, 4, 1), etc.

537.—A SWASTIKALAND MAP.

THREE different colours are necessary. The bottom right-hand corner of the map is here reproduced. The Lord High Keeper had introduced that little line dividing A and B by mistake, and this was his undoing. A, B, and C must be different colours. Except for this slip, two colours would have been sufficient.



538.—A DEAL IN EGGS.

THE smallest possible number of eggs is 719. He sold 48 dozen at 5s. per dozen, and 11 lots at 13 for 5s., making £14 15s. in all. The original number of eggs might be any multiple of 9,360 plus 719, but the smallest possible number was asked for.

539.—HALF THE ALPHABET.

THE hamlet is near Market Rasen, in Lincolnshire, and is named BUSLINGTHORPE.

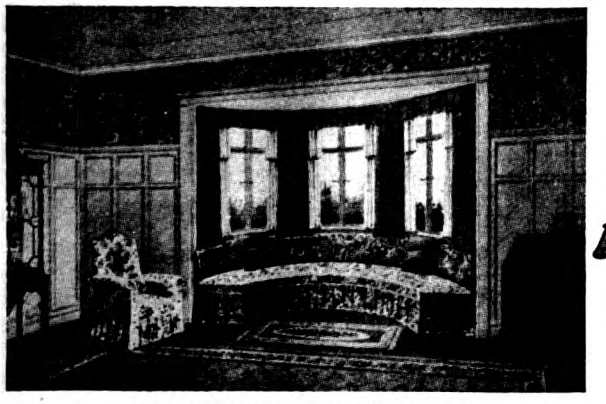
Rowlands' Macassar Oil

AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY for all who wish to **Preserve** and **Beautify** their

HAIR

As it **Penetrates** to the **Roots** it will replace the loss of the **Natural Oil** in the Hair, the want of which causes Baldness. **Ladies** and **Children** should always use it, as it lays the foundation of a Luxuriant Growth. It is also prepared in a **Golden Colour** for **Fair Hair.** Sold in **3/6, 7/-, 10/6,** and **21/-** bottles, by Stores, Chemists, Hairdressers, and Rowlands, 112, Guilford Street, London, W.C.1 (late of Hatton Garden).

Rowlands' Kalydor preserves and beautifies the Skin, and renders it soft, smooth, and delicate; bottles, **2/6** and **5/-. Rowlands' Odonto** whitens the Teeth and prevents Decay; **2/9** per box.



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ANY LENGTH REPLACED FREE IF COLOUR FADES.

Casement Cloths	...	...	31in.	from	**1/9½**
Bolton Sheetings	...	...	50 ,,	,,	**3/11½**
Fancy Damasks	...	...	50 ,,	,,	**5/11**
Tapestries	...	...	50 ,,	,,	**12/9**
Reps and Mattings	...	...	50in.	from	**4/11**
Poplins	...	...	50 ,,	,,	**7/11**
Madras Muslins	...	...	50 ,,	,,	**3/11**
Rugs	...	...	...	,,	**21/6**

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To face end of Text.

Beauty Culture

Some Simple Recipes that give Startling Results

By MIMOSA

Getting Rid of Feminine Moustaches

TO women who are annoyed by disfiguring downy hair growths a method of permanently eradicating the same will come as a piece of good news. For this purpose pure powdered pheminol may be used. Almost any chemist should be able to supply an ounce of this drug. The recommended treatment is designed not only to remove the disfiguring growth instantly, leaving no trace, but also to actually kill the hair roots without irritating the skin. leaving the skin smooth, soft and cool. This treatment should be repeated a few times at intervals of several days in order to make sure that the result shall be permanent.

How to have Thick and Pretty Hair

SOAPS and artificial shampoos ruin many beautiful heads of hair. Few people know that a teaspoonful of good stallax dissolved in a cup of hot water has a natural affinity for the hair and makes the most delightful shampoo imaginable. It leaves the hair brilliant, soft and wavy, cleanses the scalp completely and greatly stimulates the hair growth. The only drawback is that stallax seems rather expensive. It comes to the chemist only in sealed ½ lb. packages, which retail at half-a-crown. However, as this is sufficient for twenty-five or thirty shampoos, it really works out very cheaply in the end.

Blackheads, Oily Pores, etc.

THE new sparkling face-bath treatment rids the skin of blackheads, oiliness and enlarged pores almost instantly. It is perfectly harmless, pleasant and immediately effective. All you have to do is to drop a stymol tablet, obtained from the chemist's, in a glass of hot water, and after the resulting effervescence has subsided, dab the affected portions of the face freely with the liquid. When you dry the face you will find that the blackheads come right off on the towel, the large pores contract and efface themselves naturally and the greasiness is all gone,

Grey Hair Unnecessary

ONE need not resort to the very questionable expedient of hair dye in order not to have grey hair. The grey hair can easily be changed back to a natural colour in a few days' time merely by the application of a simple, old-fashioned and perfectly harmless home-made lotion. Procure from your chemist two ounces of tammalite concentrate and mix it with three ounces of bay rum. Apply this to the hair a few times with a small sponge and you will soon have the pleasure of seeing your grey hair gradually darkening to the desired shade. The lotion is pleasant, not sticky or greasy, and does not injure the hair in any way.

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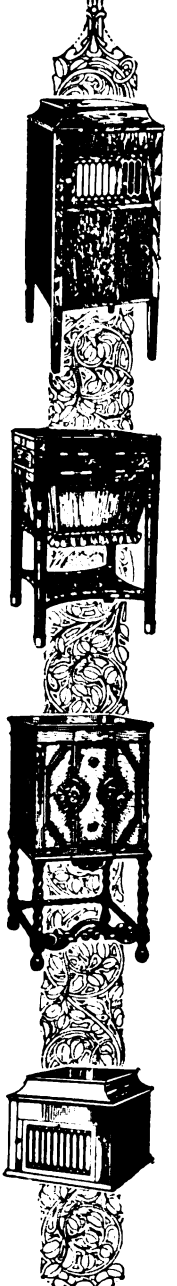

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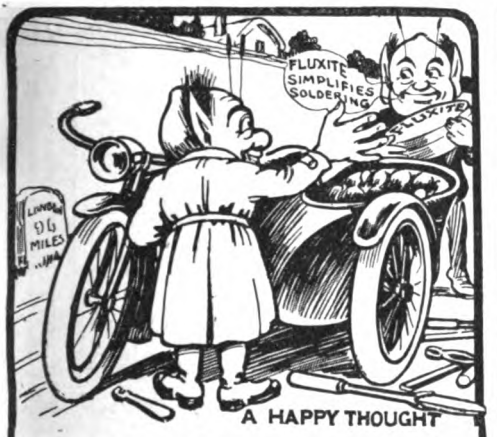

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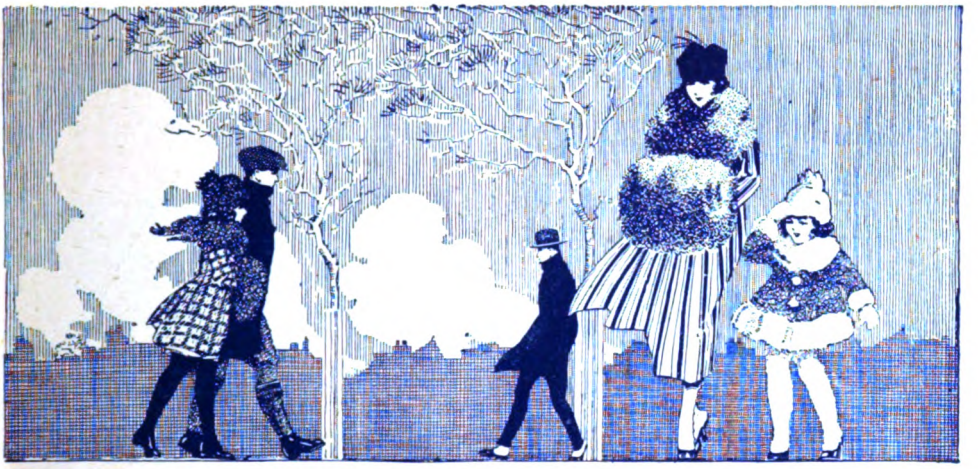

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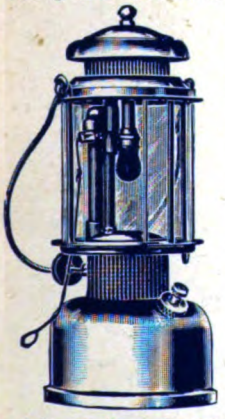

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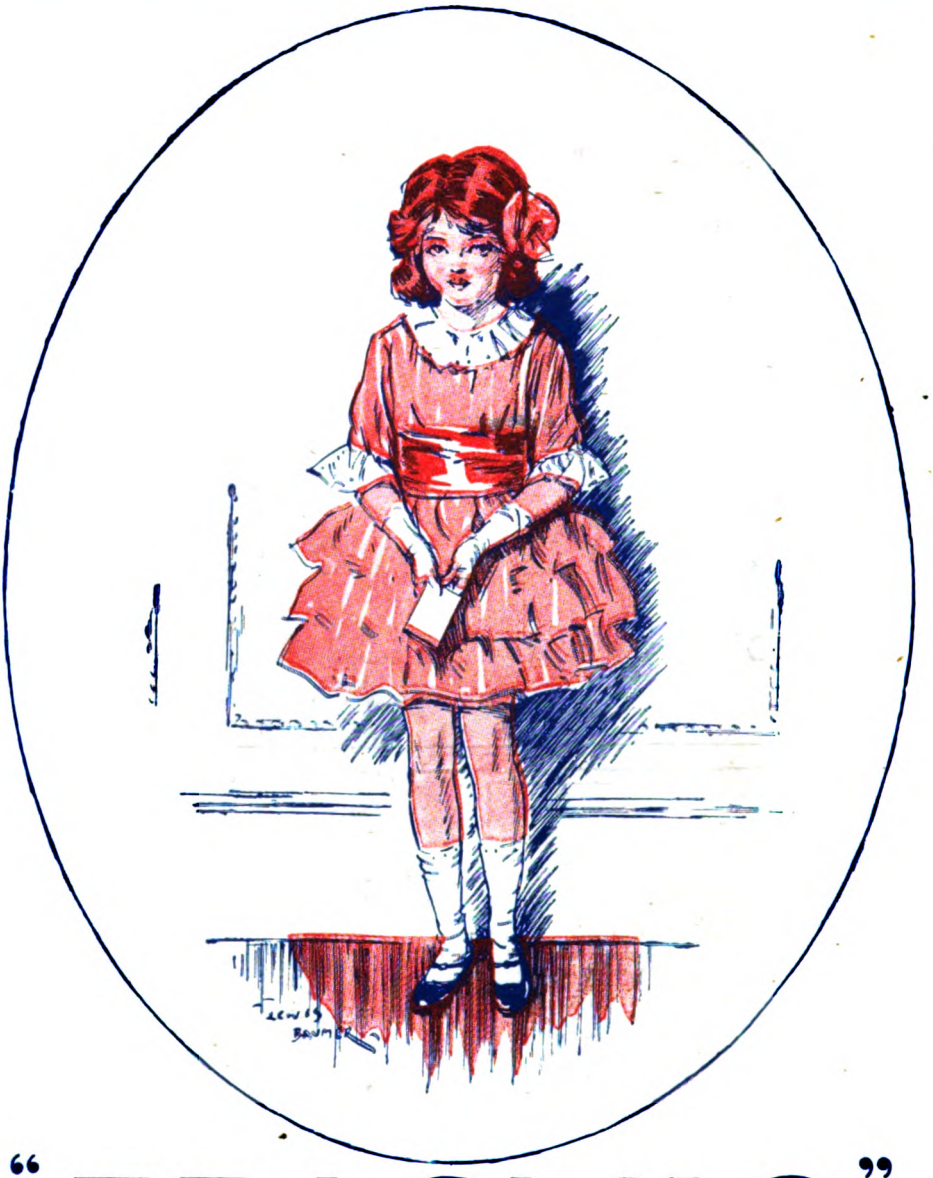

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A.A.R. AIMS AT RETIRING WHEN 55 YEARS OF AGE.

THIS PLAN WILL ENABLE HIM TO DO SO. MEANWHILE IT SAFEGUARDS THE FINANCIAL COMFORT OF HIS WIFE SHOULD HE NOT REACH THAT AGE.

THIRTY-FIVE years of age and little headway made in the matter of saving! £200 or £300, that was all. Very little financial provision for his wife also—if anything happened to him. One or two small Insurance Policies, all helpful, but not sufficient to keep her in anything like the comfort he would desire her to enjoy. That was the situation last year.

This year, how different! A.A.R. has added no less a sum than £2,000 to his prospects for retirement at the age of 55, and more than £2,000 has been actually added to the financial provision for his wife, should he be taken from her. This has been done without any undue sacrifice, and, if all goes well, the Plan can be carried through just as easily as paying the rent.

A.A.R. deposits £110 per annum for 20 years only, with the Sun Life of Canada; on his income-tax he gets abatement of £16 10s. (a gift from the Government), which really reduces the deposit to £93 10s.

If A.A.R. dies any time before the Bond (for £2,000, with profits) matures, his wife will receive the full amount of £2,000, together with 50 per cent. of all the deposits that have been made up to that time. Thus, if death occurred after paying five deposits of £110, his wife would receive £2,275.

If he lives the full period (20 years), he himself will draw out £2,000 when he is 55, together with profits which are estimated to be at least £740. Therefore his Capital will be increased by no less a sum than £2,740. As he has only deposited £1,870 net, he makes a profit of £870 on the transaction.

If he needs money at any time after making three deposits, he can obtain an advance up to 95 per cent. of the generous Surrender Value. If he finds he cannot keep up the deposits he can exercise any one of several generous options.

It is not only the best method of saving, but it enables you at the same time to safeguard the future of your Dependents. It can be adopted at any age and for any amount; your deposits may be about £10 if you cannot spare more, or £200 to £2,000 if your present income permits. The term may be for 10, 25, or any number of years.

The Policy is issued by the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, one of the most progressive companies in the world. Its assets are over £23,000,000, and its affairs are subject to Annual Government Audit.

Why not investigate? Write, giving exact age and amount you can deposit each year, to J. F. Junkin, Sun Life of Canada, 6, Canada House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2.

SAXONE SHOES
(Regd. Trade Mark).

THE ILLUSTRATION shows Style 4191, a medium brown willow calf Oxford with firm walking sole and "Broadway" full toe.

PRICE 42/-

Save Money in the End.

IT'S all in the *wear*. The first cost of 'Saxones' is sufficient to ensure the long service which comes from honest leather and good workmanship. Do not *try* to save 5/- or so at the beginning; buy 'Saxones' and save 10/- or more *in the extra wear they give you.*

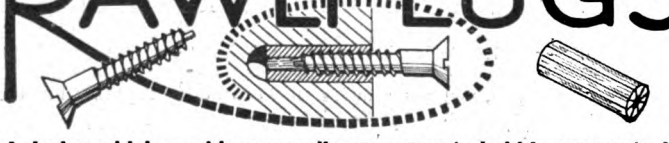
SOLD ONLY BY THE SAXONE SHOE CO. LTD.

LONDON: 5 & 6 Coventry Street, W.1; 231 Regent Street, W.1; 56-57 Strand, W.C.2; 11-12 Cheapside, E.C.2

And all large towns

THE OLD METHOD.

HOME REPAIRS AND RAWLPLUGS



THE NEW METHOD

A device which enables an ordinary screw to hold in any material

For fixing and hanging Shelves, Cupboards, Coat Hooks, Pictures, Mirrors, Overmantels, Electric, Gas and Sanitary Fittings, Wires, etc. For fixing anything by means of a screw to Walls, Ceilings, etc., of Plaster, Brick, Concrete, Marble, Stone, Tiles, etc.

One of the most difficult jobs is to put up a shelf or bookcase where the wall is either too soft for a nail to hold or too hard to get a nail into. An attempt usually results in much damage to wall paper, and if the job is accomplished it is not very satisfactory or lasting.

By means of Rawlplugs you can *screw* your shelf to the wall.

A Rawlplug is a small cylindrical body of stiffened fibres of roughly the same bore as the screw to be used. To fix, simply make a smal hole with the tool supplied, push the Rawlplug into position and turn home your screw as if in wood—and it is perfectly fast.

The Rawlplug is so made that immediately the screw enters it expands automatically against the sides of the hole; obtaining thereby a firm grip of the surrounding plaster or other materials, and a perfect thread is formed in the fibre.

Invisible when in position. Will hold half-a-ton in brick.

No skilled handling required. No damage to walls.

Millions of Rawlplugs have been used by the Admiralty, War Office, G.P.O., the principal Municipal Authorities, Railways, Building and Electrical Firms.

RAWLPLUG OUTFITS:

HOUSEHOLD OUTFIT.—50 Rawlplugs, 50 Screws, Rawlplug Tool .. **3/6** Postage 6d. extra.

MECHANIC'S OUTFIT.—100 Rawlplugs and supply of Screws, special Rawlplug Tool, 2 Bits **5/6** Postage 6d. extra.

If Rawlplugs do not do all that are claimed for them we will refund money in full.

A more complete outfit for Builders and Electricians, with all sizes of plugs and tools, is supplied at £2.

THE RAWLPLUG CO., Ltd., 12-16, Lenthall Place, Gloucester Road, South Kensington, S.W.7.

Restful and Home-like Upholstery at Economical Prices.

THE "HOLYROOD."

EASY PAYMENTS or CASH.

CARRIAGE PAID TO ANY RAILWAY STATION.

Cash with order.

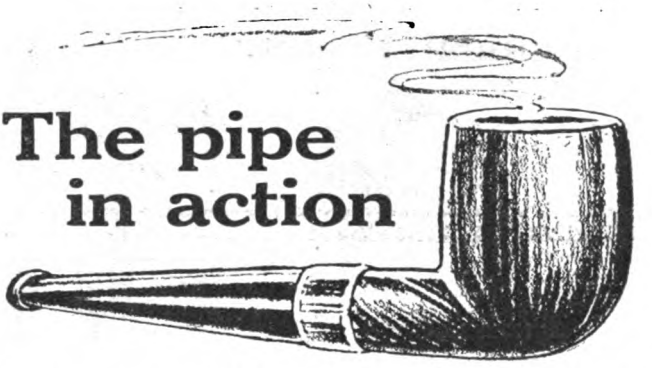
Settee, one end adjustable, Loose Cushion,	**£19**	or Easy Payment	**£21**—**£3** down,	**15/-** mthly.
Arm Chair, "Forty-winks" Head Rests,	**£10**	,, ,,	**£11**—**£2** ,,	**10/-** ,,
Divan Chair, Club Pattern - - -	**£9**	,, ,,	**£10**—**£2** ,,	**10/-** ,,
Three-Piece Set, Settee & Pair of Chairs,	**£38**	,, ,,	**£42** - **£4** ,,	**30/-** ,,

Luxurious and soundly upholstered Woollen Flocks Coppered Steel Springs. British Webs. Seats, Backs and Arms all well sprung. Covered in a variety of French and other Tapestries. Patterns submitted for Customer's selection.

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. (Dept. E). **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL**

MULLION COVE. A tour of the coast of Cornwall would never be complete without a visit to the old Smuggler's Cove, near Mullion, that most fascinating and mysterious of all Cornwall's fishing villages. The miniature harbour, with its two little solid granite breakwaters, its black and yellow encircling cliffs, rugged and precipitous, are typical of the finest scenery of the Cornish coast. Mullion village, however, is situated a mile or so from its quaint little harbour, down a few miles of winding lanes leading from the main Penzance-Lizard road through Helston, and is not particularly easy to find, but the inset map will help motor cyclists to locate the spot.



The pipe in action

How does your pipe behave in action? Like a friend? Does it make your joys the greater? Does it smooth away your cares? Is it a quiet consoler when you meet the trouble which reaches all in turn?

Some men find their pipe all this and more. Others know this *is* so and envy them. For their part, though, a pipe is just something to get vexed with. They do not know its quiet joy.

They wonder why! May we explain? Pipe-joy demands three fundamentals — (1) A good pipe. (2) Careful filling. (3) A good tobacco.

Barney's
the Ideal Tobacco

makes smoking a quiet joy. Its leaf is coarse, rich and fragrant, and so moisture-free that an ounce "bulks" well.

Fill a good pipe *carefully* with Barney's—a little at a time, pressed gently in so that the *density* is *even* throughout the bowl, —and the sheer joy of the true pipe-smoker may be yours also.

Barney's is a *medium* Tobacco, of coarse cut and amber-and-black colour. It is fragrant to the smell, cool in smoking, and even in burning, whether smoked inside or outdoors. When filled as directed, it can be smoked right down to *dry ash*, which just *falls* from the pipe.

Each packet carries the Manufacturers' Guarantee. If out-of-condition, it will be replaced free and your postage refunded. Your Tobacconist can obtain supplies *specially for you* if he does not already stock Barney's.

Sold in three strengths, each in 1 oz. Lead Packets and in 2, 4, 8 and 16 oz. Tins at 1/1 the ounce throughout.

(3) *TO THE TRADE.—Supplies of Barney's (medium), Punchbowle (full strength), and Parsons' Pleasure (the mild Barney's) can be obtained through your usual Wholesaler, or direct from the Manufacturers:—*

JOHN SINCLAIR LTD.
National Sales Bureau, 24 Holborn, E.C.1.
Also at Edinburgh: Factory, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

TO THE . . . SMOKER, AND TOBACCO DEALER, OVERSEAS

Barney's—Britain's winning Pipe Tobacco—is making rapid headway Overseas. True it is that good stuff travels far.

Canada, India and China, Norway, Holland and Denmark, are already receiving supplies. We invite inquiries from Tobacco Dealers in these Countries, and in all others where the need is felt for something *really good* in Pipe Tobacco.

Smokers abroad who wish to try "*cheery, chummy Barney's from the North Country*," can have a 2-lb. Tin sent ex-bond at a cost of 20/-, *plus* postage, either direct, or through the V.P.P. or C.O.D. systems.

To order: send name and address clearly written with remittance for £1, and add the cost of postage (allow for 5lb. gross weight) to the Country of order; or instruct per V.P.P. or C.O.D.

Address: **"Export Dept. S.M.3," John Sinclair, Ltd., International Sales Bureau, 24, Holborn, London, E.C.1, England.**

Ex-bond Prices apply also to Punchbowle (full strength) and Parsons' Pleasure (the mild Barney's), but only to orders sent Abroad and of not less than 2-lb. The Home price of the Barney's Trio is 1/1 the ounce for every ounce.

A new delight in Life!

HASSALL

The John Hassall School—the most successful Art School in the world—has brought a new delight to thousands. It teaches *thoroughly* every branch of Creative Art in Black and White work. Great artists may be rare, but most of us can learn to draw *well*; a delightful and often profitable recreation.

Many of our most successful pupils come to us unconscious of the possession of latent talent of a high order. It is our pleasure to recognise and develop their creative ability.

Your case may be similar, therefore—

WRITE TO-DAY

for the illustrated book, "*THE JOHN HASSALL WAY*," to

The John Hassall Correspondence Art School, Ltd. (Dept. S.M.4), 3, Stratford Studios, Stratford Road, Kensington, W.8.

Beauty's Praise of Beauty's Aid

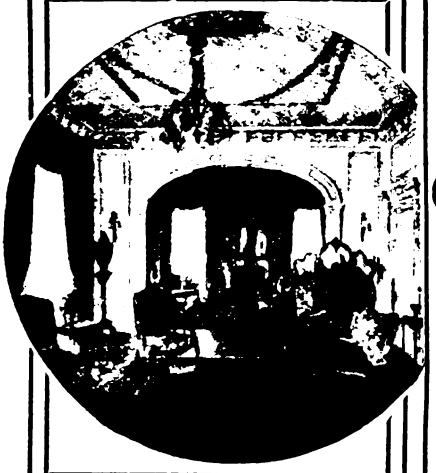
A PÆAN of praise of Pond's—the original Vanishing Cream—has lately arisen from a brilliant galaxy of beautiful and charming women, including MISS RENEE KELLY, MISS PHYLLIS DARE, MISS CONNIE EDISS, MME. TAMARA KARSAVINA, MISS MADGE TITHERADGE, MISS LILLAH McCARTHY—a unanimous testimony to the magical effect of POND'S in making the skin creamy-soft, and preserving a youthful delicacy of complexion. Pond's—delightfully fragrant with Jacqueminot Roses—is perfectly simple to use and vanishes immediately without massage, leaving no shiny or sticky after-effects. A sure protection against ***Chapped Hands, Cracked Lips,*** and ***Roughness*** and ***Redness*** of the ***Skin.***

"IT SOOTHES AND SMOOTHS THE SKIN."

In handsome Opal Jars with Aluminium Screw Lids, 1/3 and 2/6, and Collapsible Tubes, 9d. and 1/3, of all Chemists and Stores. If you cannot obtain the new tube from your Chemist to-day, send us ninepence, and we will dispatch it per return, post free.

POND'S EXTRACT CO. (DEPT. 30), 71, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

Pond's Vanishing Cream



DRAWING ROOM.
This artistic and refined effect produced with "SATINETTE."

Deydol Distemper instead of Wall-paper is a splendid investment, and **Cripon Supervar** on surfaces requiring varnishing is unsurpassed for fine appearance and durability.

All good class decorators will use the above materials at your request.

Satinette
TRADE MARK
ENAMEL PAINT

THE MOST ATTRACTIVE AND ENDURING OF ALL MODERN DECORATIVE "FINISHES"

FADED and perished paintwork is a spectre in itself—depressing to the spirits, and lessening property value all the time.

Such surfaces can be transformed into attractive, durable, and consequently truly economical decoration, by calling in your Decorator now and asking him to re-finish all Doors, Skirting, Moulding, Window Frames, etc., with "SATINETTE ENAMEL PAINT."

A beautiful brochure telling you all about "SATINETTE" will be sent post free on request to the manufacturers named below. When applying please mention the name and address of your usual Decorator.

PINCHIN, JOHNSON & CO., Ltd.
Enamel, Varnish, Paint, & Colour Manufacturers,
General Buildings, Aldwych, LONDON, W.C.2.

THE NAME: "TURF"

JUBILEE SIZE

By Request—

In compliance with the request of many customers TURF Virginia Cigarettes—of the same QUALITY so appreciated in the larger sizes—are *also* now put up in JUBILEE Size at 10 for 6d. The Name "TURF" is known and respected by Cigarette smokers all over the World.

Made by Alexander Boguslavsky, Ltd., 55, Piccadilly, London, W.

10 for 6D.

The Name.

This Name should be engraved upon the minds of all smokers who like a first-class Cigarette at a moderate Price. The Name TURF will stand for QUALITY in the future as in the past.

Think of the Name: TURF. Think of the PRICE: 10 for 6d. Smoke one. You may then forget the PRICE—you will always remember the QUALITY.

10 for 6D.

JOHNSON'S

Paste - Liquid - Powdered

PREPARED WAX

FOR LINOLEUMS

THE easy, practical way to polish and preserve finished surfaces is with Johnson's Prepared Wax and a cloth. You don't need brushes or mops of any kind.

Johnson's Prepared Wax polishes perfectly over any finish—varnish, French polish or oil. It forms a thin protecting coat over the varnish, similar to the service rendered by a piece of plate-glass over a desk, table or dresser top.

Your dealer has "**Johnson's**"—there is no substitute.

FOR FURNITURE

FOR FLOORS

FOR DESKS

FOR TABLES

FOR MOTOR CARS.

Johnson's Prepared Wax imparts a lustre of great beauty and durability. It gives a hard, dry, velvety polish which will not collect dust or show finger prints. It cleans and preserves the varnish—prevents checking and cracking.

Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste is the proper polish for floors of all kinds—wood, linoleum, etc. It does not show scratches or heel marks, and floors polished with it can easily be kept in perfect condition. Worn spots can be rewaxed without going over the entire surface.

Use **Johnson's Prepared Wax Liquid** for polishing your furniture, leather goods, woodwork and motor cars. It polishes instantly with but very little rubbing. Does not gather dust or show finger prints.

For a Perfect Dancing Surface

Just sprinkle Johnson's Powdered Wax over any floor. The feet of the dancers will spread the wax, polish the floor, and immediately put it in perfect condition for dancing. Johnson's Powdered Wax is conveniently put up in shaker top tins.

In 2/6, 4/-, 8/- and 14/6 sizes.

Send Sixpence for a trial size of Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, West Drayton, Middlesex.

Racine, U.S.A.; Brantford, Canada; Sydney, Australia.

LET US SEND YOU A SINGLE SAMPLE BOOT OR SHOE ON FREE APPROVAL

FOUR DAYS' FREE TRIAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

WE will send you on free four days approval, without any deposit, a single boot or shoe for inspection and fitting on receipt of your full name and address, together with required size. This gives you full opportunity to try the sample on, examine the style, material and workmanship, and get the opinion of others.

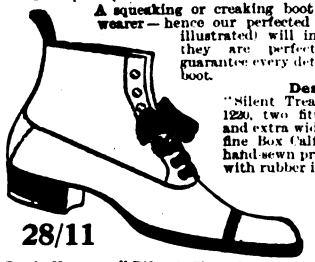
If the sample gives you satisfaction, remit the price within four days, and the fellow boot or shoe will be sent by return. Otherwise, return the sample, carriage paid, and be free from obligation.

If, however, you prefer to save time, send cash with order straight away. We always guarantee complete satisfaction or the return of money in full.

We give you the finest value and the finest workmanship at prices which save you middle profits. Our offers are bargains in the *genuine* sense of the word, because they represent a real saving of money without any question as to value. The reputation of "Draper Quality" is the foundation on which our huge business has been built up. One trial will convince you—write to-day.

This offer is confined to residents in the United Kingdom. Overseas customers should send remittance with order, adding 1/- in the £, or any fraction of a £, to the quoted prices, to cover extra postage and packing. Orders value £10 and upwards postage and packing free.

GENT.'S "SILENT TREAD" BAL. STYLE.



A squeaking or creaking boot always annoys its wearer—hence our perfected "Silent Tread" (as illustrated) will instantly appeal, for they are perfectly noiseless. We guarantee every detail of this splendid boot.

Description.

"Silent Tread" Bal. Stock No. 1220, two fittings, full medium and extra wide. Uppers of superfine Box Calf and made on the hand-sewn principle. Heel fitted with rubber inset.

Price **28/11**

Size 12, **2/-** extra.

Stock No. 1225 "Silent Tread" Fox Derby possesses all the features of the "Silent Tread," but made in Derby style. **Price 28/11.** Size 12, **2/-** extra. Also in Tan, No. 1226. **Price 31/6.** Size 12, **2** - extra.

LADIES' "SILENT TREAD" BOOT

In this instance we have applied the "Silent Tread" principle to a superfine Glacé Kid Boot for Ladies, which in design and finish is a perfect model of its kind. Here again the construction of the boot makes for ease and comfort, yielding freely to every movement of the foot. The heels are of Cuban mould and fitted with our special rubber tip. Made in usual Ladies' sizes in medium and broad widths.

No. 2550. Price .. **27/6**

Size 8, **1/6** extra.

Carriage paid to your door.

Style No. 2550.

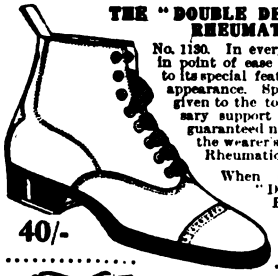
Ladies' "Silent Tread" Shoes. No. 2560, Oxford Model. No. 2565, Gibson Model. Two fittings, medium and wide .. **24/6**

Size 8, **1/6** extra.

ANTI-RHEUMATIC FOOTWEAR.

These justly popular Boots are as smart in appearance as ordinary high-class footwear, but in addition are built upon special principles which prevent damp or cold penetrating either the soles or uppers. Those subject to rheumatic attacks following exposure to dampness will find that these boots, as has been proved by some thousands of our customers, definitely prevent this danger.

THE "DOUBLE DEFIANCE" ANTI-RHEUMATIC BOOT.



No. 1130. In every way an admirable Boot in point of ease and comfort, in addition to its special features of strength and good appearance. Special attention has been given to the toecap by which the necessary support is introduced, but it is guaranteed not to chafe or press upon the wearer's toes. It is a heavy Anti-Rheumatic Boot for "Best" wear.

When ordering please specify "Double Defiance" Boot **40/-**

Carriage paid to your door.

Size 12, **2/-** extra.

LADIES' ANTI-RHEUMATIC BUTTON BOOT.

Produced to comply with the demand of those who prefer button instead of lace fastening. A graceful model incorporating all the celebrated Anti-Rheumatic features. Splendid wearing quality, will keep the feet warm and dry in the wettest of weather. Fitted with whole rubber heel top-piece.

No. 4055. Box Calf .. **33/6**
No. 4050. Glacé Kid ..

Size 8, **1/6** extra.

LACE MODEL.

No. 4042. Glacé Kid.
No. 4045. Box Calf.

32/-

Size 8, **1/6** extra.

Further models of Anti-Rheumatic Footwear illustrated and described in our Catalogue.

LADIES' "COMFY" BOOT.

The "Comfy" Boot appeals specially to middle-aged and elderly ladies, to whom comfort is the chief consideration. It has soft glacé uppers and medium weight soles, nice and broad in the tread. The linings are smooth and soft. No. 2151, "All British."

Factory Price .. **27/6**

Carriage paid to your door.

Size 8, **1/6** extra.

LADIES' HOUSE SHOE.

Soft Black Glacé uppers and light solid leather soles, sewn; heels low and sensible in shape. A house shoe, but strong enough for occasional wear out-of-doors. Ladies' sizes, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

All one price.

No. 3060.

9/11

Carriage paid to your door.

68-PAGE ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE.

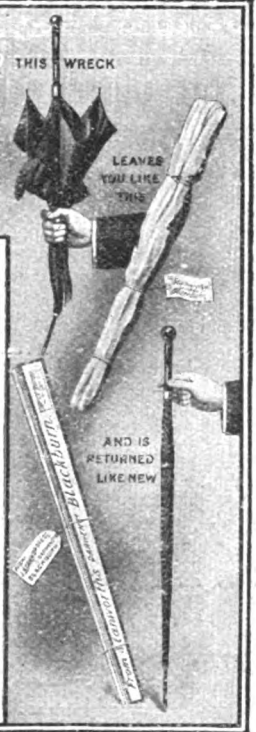
Send at once for a Free Copy of our Illustrated Catalogue. It contains illustrations and descriptions of Boots and Clothing for Men, Women, and Children at direct-to-wear prices. This book will be found an invaluable shopping guide, and a copy will be sent post free to any address on request.

No charge is made for Postage and Packing within the United Kingdom.

ERNEST DRAPER & CO., Ltd., 53, "All-British" Works, NORTHAMPTON, Eng.

THE LARGEST "BOOTS BY POST" BUSINESS IN THE WORLD.

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.



Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for 10/-. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from 5/- upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

Increased Value in Suits by Post.

Pure Wool Cloths bought in big lots straight from the factories and low distribution costs through selling by post make "Lion" Tailored Suits excellent value to-day. The cloth quality is easily 30 to 50 per cent. better than suits bought through the usual channels. Each suit is separately and individually cut and made to customers' measures with first-class linings and canvas, etc. A stylishly cut Lounge Suit of smart tweed is only **£4 10s.**

Test our cloth quality by writing for 100 Cloth Patterns FREE.

They're sent in neat box together with book of styles by eminent London fashion artist and simple, clear instructions for self-measuring. Each cloth is also priced with the cost per yard. Any length cut.

Special despatch department for Overseas men.

NO RISK—Misfit Means Money Back

Write for FREE Patterns now to—
GROVES & LINDLEY,
Exporters of Cloth & Clothing,
114, THE LION, HUDDERSFIELD.

Best for the Bairns.

Hovis appeals to healthy young appetites as no other bread can—it is so delicious. But more important still,

HOVIS
(Trade Mark)

contains valuable organic phosphates and flesh-forming elements which **build sturdy growing young frames.**

Give the children Hovis bread because they like it and because it is so good for them.

Your Baker Bakes it.

What are Pearls ?

THE origin of the rare and beautiful real gem—its formation in the heart of the oyster shell — is common knowledge.

SCIENTIFIC research, however, has discovered a process which gives to the world magnificent copies of this Queen of Gems. The result is

Ciro Pearls

which have only to be seen and worn for their exquisite beauty to be appreciated.

READERS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY OF FORMING THEIR OWN OPINION BY

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea, we will send you a necklet of No. 1 quality Ciro Pearls, 16ins. long, complete with case, or a Ring, Brooch, Ear-rings, or any other Jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money.

This offer also applies to our necklets of No. 2 quality, two guineas, and No. 3 quality, three guineas. The difference in quality corresponds to the difference in quality of the genuine pearl reproduced. Each is an actual reproduction of the real gem, but the more expensive Ciro represents the more expensive genuine necklet.

Other lengths of above necklets at proportionate rates, gold clasps 2/6 extra.

Our Booklet No. 12 contains designs of all new jewels (sent post free).

CIRO PEARLS, LTD. (Dept. 12), 39, Old Bond St., W.1. (Piccadilly End).

We have no shop. Our Showrooms are on the First Floor, over Lloyd's Bank.

Splendid for your skin

NOT the finest face or complexion glove can rival the springiness and velvet touch of a Sorbo Sponge. Soap lathers up on a Sorbo Sponge in a delicate foam. Dust and tiredness are gently cleaned away from your skin with a delightful soft massage effect

Sorbo Sponges are made by an all-British process from pure natural rubber. Soap improves Sorbo Sponges. They never get slimy. There is a Sorbo Sponge for every purpose from **1/6** to **10/6.**

Buy Your Kiddie a SORBO BOUNCER, the Ball you can't Burst.

1/6½ of all dealers.

Sorbo Sponges are packed in a dainty hygienic transparent bag. Sold by all leading Chemists and Stores. Ask to see them to-day.

Sorbo Sponge

THE MOST ABSORBENT RUBBER SPONGE

Wherever Sponges are sold you can get SORBO Sponges in the following sizes: No. 1, **1/6**; No. 2, **2/6**; No. 3, **3/6**; No. 4, **5/-**; No. 4R, **7/6**; No. 5, **10/6.**

Wholesale only: **SORBO RUBBER SPONGE PRODUCTS, LTD., 24, Walbrook, London, E.C.4.**

Telephone: City 9372. Telegrams: "Osorbeau, London."

THIS FREE BOOK

puts you in direct touch with the FACTORY!

HALF-HOOP RING. Handsome design, set with Diamonds and three fine gems. **45/-**

CROSS-OVER RING Perfectly cut Diamond and Ruby, worth double. **80/-**

HANDSOME GIPSY RING. Three perfectly matched Diamonds of fine lustre. **85/-**

NEW DESIGN. Three Rubies and two Diamonds in 18-ct. gold. **£5**

CLUSTER RING. Nine exquisite Diamonds of first water **£10**

DIAMONDS AND RUBIES. Perfectly matched stones in 18-carat Gold. **£10**

IT S YOURS FOR A POSTCARD!

Far-sighted bargain buyers realise that Gold and Diamonds are better than banknotes! Banknotes have a habit of disappearing, but a beautiful jewel always remains a joy to possess, often increasing in value. This

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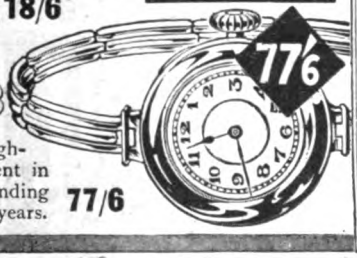

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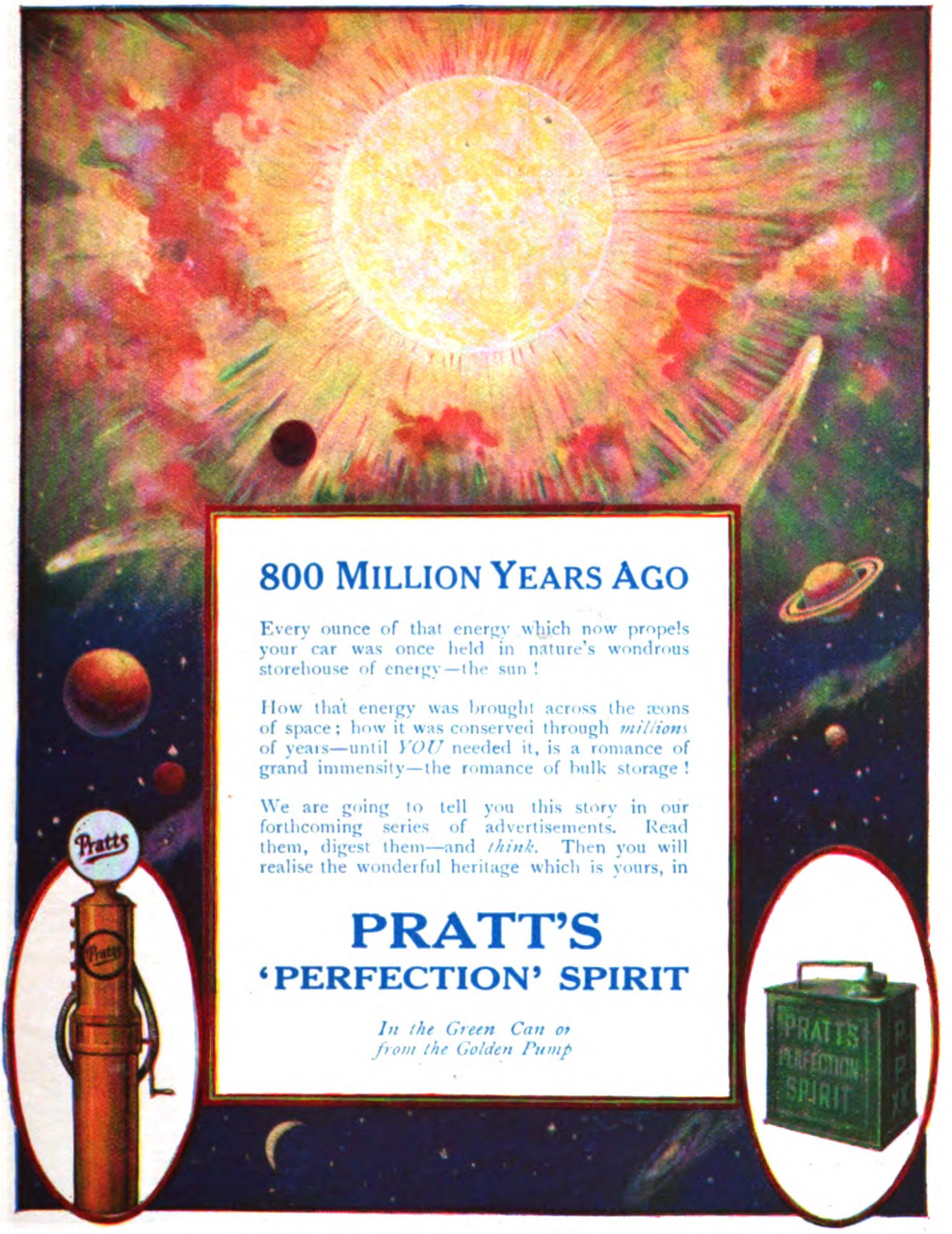

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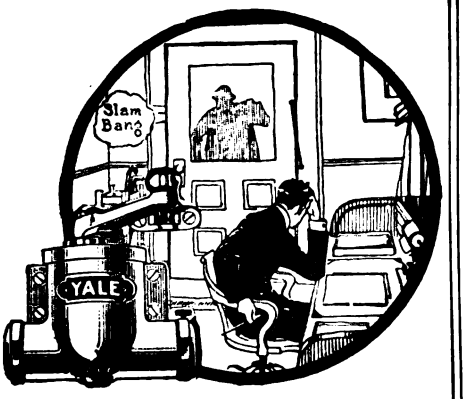

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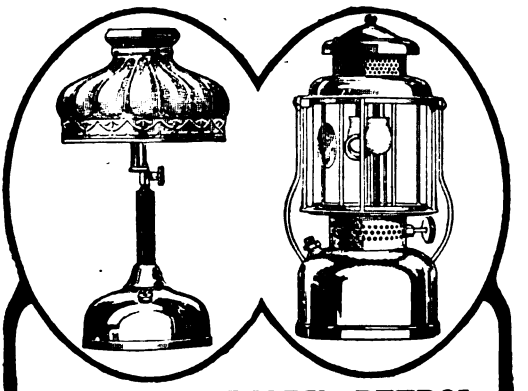

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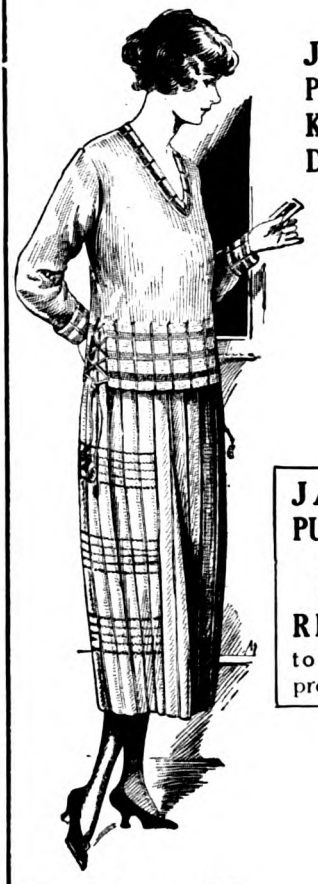

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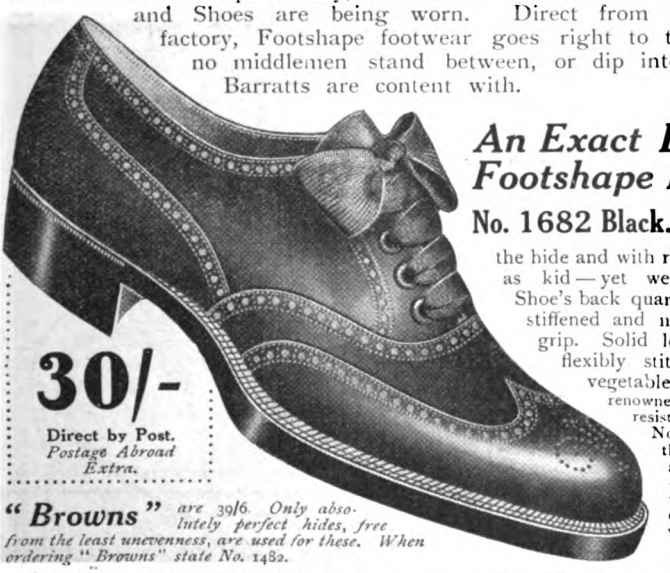

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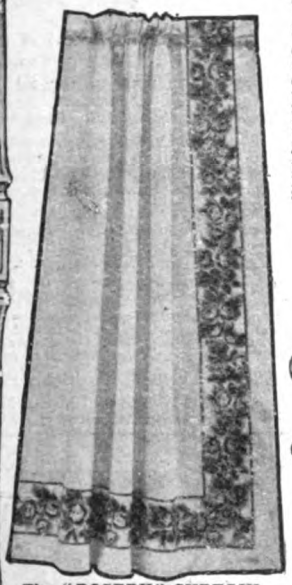

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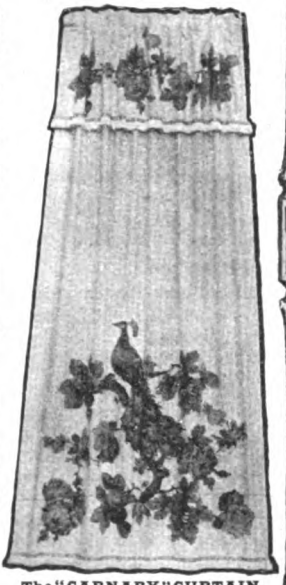

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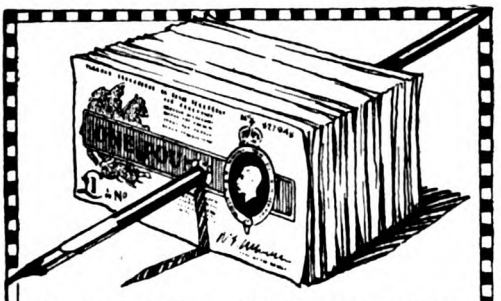

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The dose. Less than half of what you have been accustomed to take of ordinary salines.

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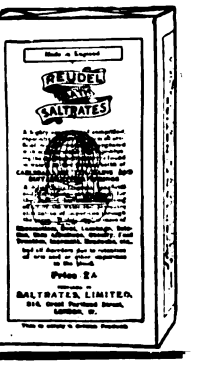

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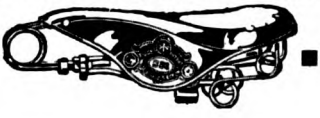

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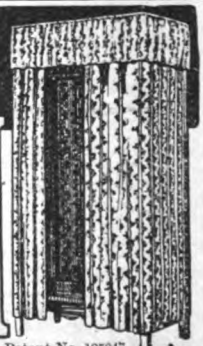

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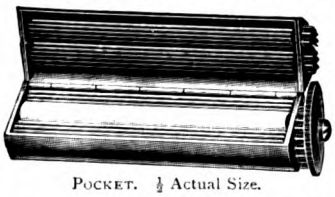

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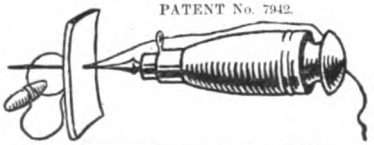

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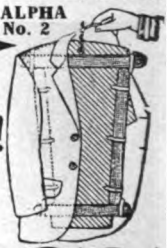

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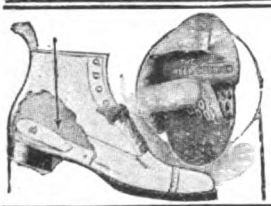

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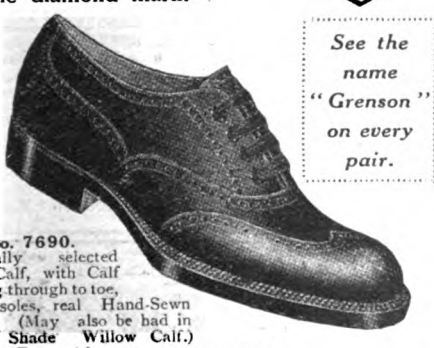

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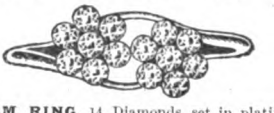

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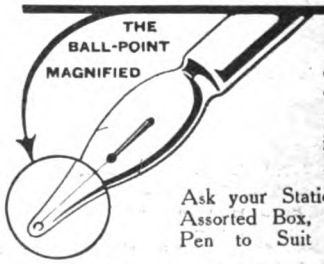

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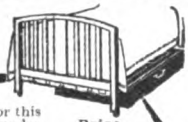

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61 What Next ?

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The secret of a Reliable Memory can be learnt by you. I have taught thousands by "Nature's Perfect Process," and I can teach you. But I won't ask you to sit up night after night, studying, or to spend all your spare time memorising—that's the unnatural way of doing things, and only serves to make life unendurable. My course is based on Nature's Own Rules, and I will send you a New and Enlarged Explanatory Booklet for a postcard bearing your name and address.

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I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet thirty years ago I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.

SEEKING A HAIR GROWTH.

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that, in the hope of growing new hair, I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "The white brother without a scalp lock."

AMERICAN INDIANS NEVER BALD.

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands round their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret?

Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.

MY HAIR GREW AGAIN.

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian Elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly.

The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre, and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

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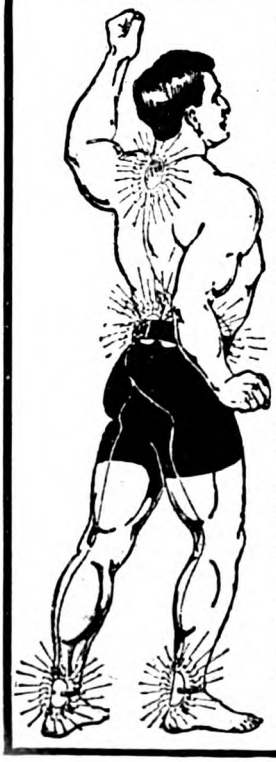

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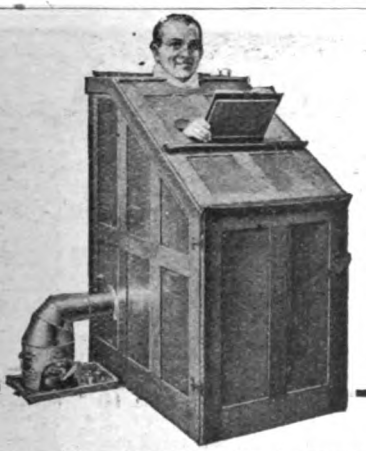

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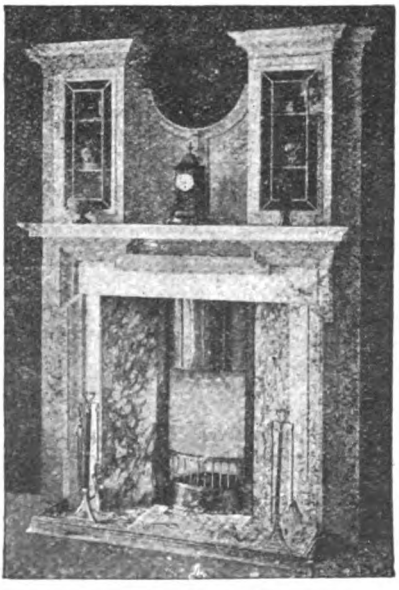

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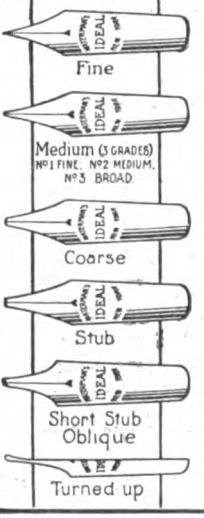

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for April, 1921.

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Frontispiece: "I stopped short, startled. To what could that girl be persuading Namba? Whatever it was, she succeeded. I saw the Malay draw the gleaming blade of his kris from his sash and, with a low obeisance, solemnly kiss it."

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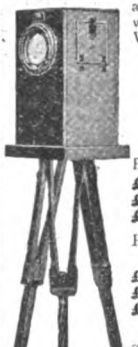

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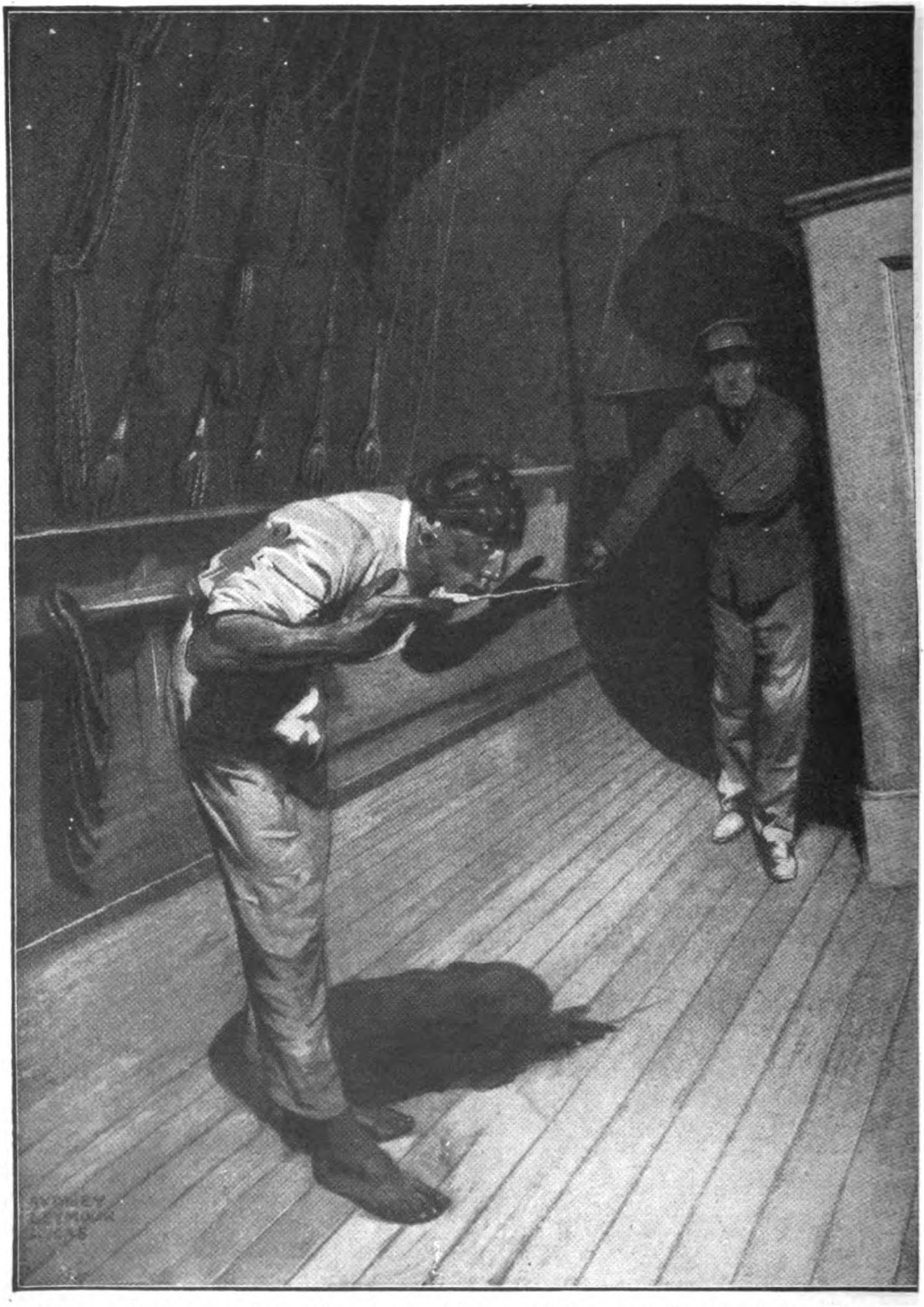
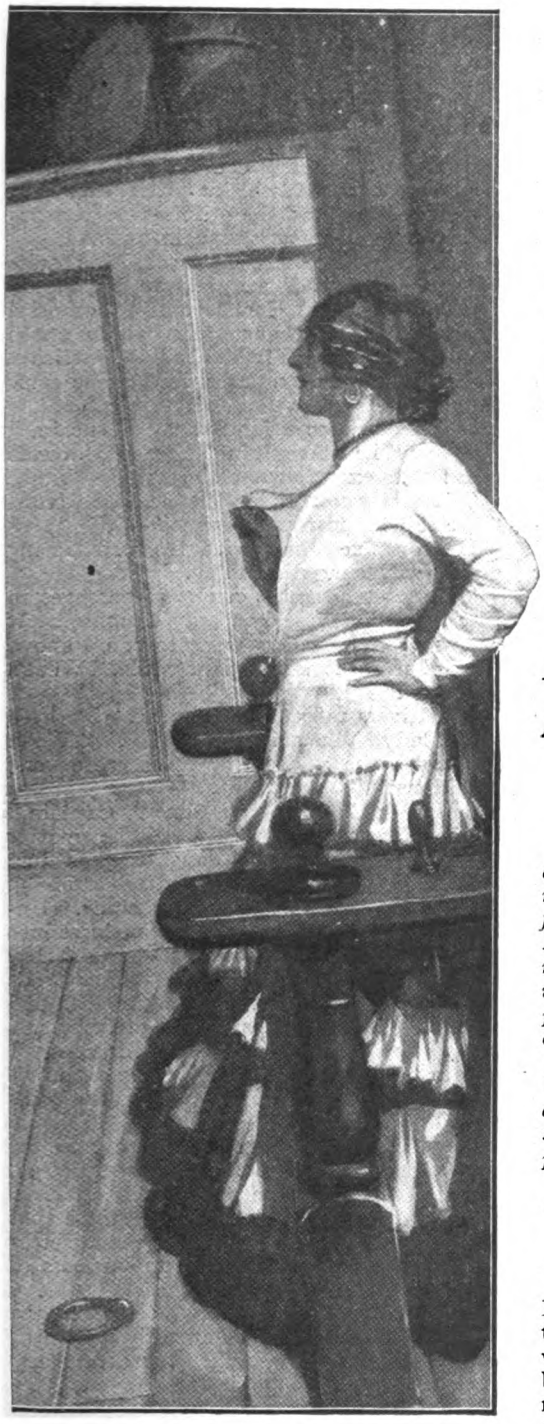


"I stopped short, startled. To what could that girl be persuading Namba? Whatever draw the gleaming blade of his kris from his sash and. with a low



it was, she succeeded. I saw the Malay obeisance, solemnly kiss it."

THIS STORY HAS TWO ENDINGS—WHICH DO YOU PREFER?

A Siren of the Tropics

by F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

Illustrated by S. SEYMOUR LUCAS

The narrative which follows was discovered among the papers of the late Walter Watts, master mariner, and his executors, having failed to trace any members of the family of Hector Stevenson, of Aberdeen—to whose relatives Captain Watts, by his will, left the whole of his estate—now adopt this method of publicity in the hope that it may catch the eye of one of the beneficiaries.

The narrative commences with Captain Watts's reasons for writing this confession, and a solemn asseveration of his veracity. Considerations of space compel the omission of this prefatory matter.

IN the year 1880 I was second mate on the brig *Arafura*, three hundred tons register, trading from the China ports to Sydney and occasionally across the Pacific to San Francisco. Like the modern tramp steamer, in fact, she would go anywhere that cargo offered. Owned as she was by her master, Captain Rivers, a bluff seaman of the old school, running expenses were kept at the minimum. Captain Rivers, Hector Stevenson—the first officer—and myself comprised all the white men on board.

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The crew was Lascar—Malays for the most part, under a Malay *serang*. The cook and cabin steward were both Chinese.

Between Hector Stevenson and myself there was a more than common degree of intimacy. Shipmates for more than a year, we had become fast friends. We were both young; I, twenty-three; he, a year older. Tall, big-framed, blond, with singularly fascinating blue eyes, he reminded one of those old Vikings whose blood he may indeed have had in his veins, for he came from a part of Scotland for long centuries exposed to their descents. His character was one of utter candour and simplicity. He looked one straight in the eyes when he spoke, and his word was sacred. I cannot even now think upon him without emotion. Thirty-five years ago we were like brothers together.

IN October of that year we loaded at Canton with a cargo for Singapore and Sydney. The run down the China Sea before the north-east monsoon was uneventful, and at Singapore we had the good fortune to pick up a balance of cargo for Sydney, our final port. I suppose it was about the end of November—summer weather in those seas—when we finished loading. On the day before we sailed Captain Rivers invited me ashore with him while he transacted his business with the shipper's agent. Of course, the three of us adjourned to the club. Little did I realize then, as we entered it, that this was to be the turning-point of my life—that from that moment I should be able to trace the chain of circumstances which has made me, although unapprehended by the law, a self-condemned solitary, alone with my conscience on all the many ships I have since commanded!

The three of us sat down on the veranda overlooking the harbour. We had been there only a few minutes when through the doors behind us emerged a big, powerfully-built man who stood scanning the company on the veranda as though in quest of someone. There was something curiously sinister in that hard-set face with the clipped yellow moustache and penetrating grey eyes which made me look twice at him. I remember thinking that he would be an ugly adversary in a fight. Then his gaze fell upon us and he came straight across to us.

Nodding a curt "Good morning" to the agent, he addressed the skipper.

"Captain Rivers, I believe?" he said. Even the pleasant smile that flashed from the white teeth under his moustache did not quite dispel the sinister impression he had first made upon me.

"At your service, sir," said the skipper, looking up in surprise at this total stranger. Rivers, however, was a man who was instantly friends with anybody. "Sit down and have a drink."

"Much obliged, Captain," replied the stranger, pulling up a chair to the little table and seating himself. "My name is Hanson."

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Hanson," said the skipper. "What can I do for you?" He passed over the whisky bottle, and even his eyes opened at the stiffness of the peg poured out by our new acquaintance.

Mr. Hanson's hand, however, was quite steady as he lifted the glass to his mouth and, with a curt "Here's yours!" emptied it with an air of unconcern which spoke volumes both for his habits and the fortitude of his head. The drink disposed of, he came to business.

"You are bound for Sydney, Captain, I believe?" he queried, in the voice of a man who knows exactly what he wants.

"Perfectly correct, sir," replied old Rivers. "We sail to-morrow morning."

Hanson fixed him with his penetrating grey eyes, his mouth smiling.

"Captain, I want a couple of passages to Macassar—for myself and my daughter. It means a couple of days' delay to you, I know, but I'll make it worth your while. What's your figure?"

Old Rivers reflected a moment.

"A lady?" he said, doubtfully. "We're not quite the packet for lady passengers, Mr. Hanson."

"We don't expect a liner, Captain," replied Hanson, cheerfully. "The matter is urgent to me. My daughter has just finished her education here, and I was relying on my own schooner to take us home. Unfortunately, I sent her on some business into the Archipelago, and I have just heard that she is cast away. The Dutch steamer is not due for a couple of months, and, as luck will have it, there happens to be no craft for sale here which is suitable for my purposes. I was in something of a dilemma when, providentially, I heard that you were on the point of sailing for Sydney."

There was a bluff good-fellowship in the man's tone which was distinctly ingratiating. Were it not for those eyes which failed to participate in his smile, I must confess that my initial prejudice would have completely vanished. However, it was no business of mine.

"You live in Macassar?" asked the skipper, evidently to gain another moment or two for reflection rather than from any real curiosity.

Hanson's brow clouded.

"No," he replied, curtly. "But Macassar is good enough. Put us ashore there and I can manage." Then, as if to mollify the

brusqueness of this reply, he added, with a reversion to cordiality: "Name your figure, Captain. You'll find us easy-going passengers."

Old Rivers made up his mind. As he told me afterwards, he thought a lady passenger would be a pleasant interlude in the monotony of our lives. He suggested a sum which, he also confessed, was more than he expected to get. But Hanson agreed without the slightest attempt to bargain.

"That's settled then, Captain," he said, cheerily. "You sail first thing in the morning, I believe? We'll come aboard to-night."

"Who is that fellow?" Rivers asked our companion, when Hanson had departed. "Do you know him?"

The agent laughed.

"We all know him—and yet none of us does. He's something of a mystery. Once a year he turns up here in his schooner—she has been wrecked, as he told you—with a cargo of pearls, trepang, and sometimes spices, pepper, or ginger. But where he comes from, no one knows. He has tucked himself away somewhere round Celebes. That's all we can get out of him. He's a peculiar card—pretty much of a rough hand when he likes, I imagine. He's had a daughter at the big school here for some years. She would be about eighteen now—half-caste, of course."

"Is he English?" I asked. "There's something about him——" I stopped, unable to define it.

"He says he is," replied the agent. "Personally, I think, he looks more like a Scandinavian of some sort. However, he calls himself Hanson and not Hansen—and it's nobody's business but his own."

"Certainly not," agreed the skipper, as he turned to me. "Come along, Mr. Watts. We must go and get things shipshape."

WE had a busy afternoon.

When tea-time came the three of us sat round our meal in the cabin with a certain amount of suppressed excitement. For so many months we had dwelt alone together that this imminent invasion of our privacy, brief though we anticipated it to be, assumed an enormous importance.

"I wonder what the daughter will be like," said I.

"Pooh! one of those mean little half-caste girls," replied Stevenson, disdainfully. I noticed, however, that he wore his best jacket. So, for that matter, did the skipper and myself.

"If she's eighteen, she'll be a grown woman," observed old Rivers. "No fighting, mind, you lads," he added, with a malicious twinkle in his eye. "We don't want any more jealousies on board this ship."

Hector's handsome face flushed as he looked up. The skipper had touched on a sore point, for we had both been rather sweet on an English girl at Canton.

"Speaking for myself, sir, I am not likely to lose my head over a half-caste Malay woman!" he said, with some emphasis. "Walter here is welcome to her."

Before I could equally disclaim any prospective interest, there was a sound of feet on the deck overhead, a heavy tread on the companion-way, and a bluff voice sang out:—

"Come aboard, Captain!"

We turned to see Hanson at the foot of the companion stairs.

Hector and I both glanced, on the same impulse, up to the open cabin-skylight overhead. The shadow of a slim form lay across it. That contemptuous phrase of Stevenson's seemed to ring in our guilty ears. We knew too well how plainly audible on deck was a loud remark uttered below the skylight. However, we had not long to indulge our embarrassment. Hanson turned and called up the companion-way:—

"Maya! Come down and be introduced."

We were all three on our feet as the white-clad figure ran lightly down the stairs—and we all stared in astonishment as she came into the cabin. Hanson's daughter was a beauty such as none of us had ever set eyes on in our lives. Half-caste she may have been—she certainly was—but her mother was assuredly no ordinary Malay woman. Her skin seemed dazzlingly white by contrast with the jet-black hair and the large dark eyes which opened wide upon us as we were presented to her. Her face was a perfect oval, her nose dainty and fine at the nostrils, her mouth firm yet full in the curves, and of a most disturbing scarlet. In fact, her entire presence was strangely, mysteriously disturbing. There was nothing of the schoolgirl about her. As the skipper had predicted, she was a grown woman—a woman of altogether exceptional beauty and fascination.

Old Rivers was quite abashed as he proffered a clumsy welcome.

I glanced at Hector as she shook hands with him. Self-consciously stiff, there was no trace in him now of the scorn with which he had referred to "mean little half-caste girls."

As for myself, I mumbled some embarrassed banality, and flushed to the ears when she added, with a smile in which, however, I could detect no malice:—

"Mr. *Walter* Watts?"

The allusion was plain. I could have sunk through the cabin floor.

Hanson stood silently by, the piercing eyes under his heavy brow glittering with

amusement, evidently enjoying the effect produced by his daughter.

Hector and I both muttered an unintelligible excuse and got away on deck. We felt as awkward as a couple of raw schoolboys in that cabin.

"By Jove!" I said, when we were alone. "She *is* a beauty, isn't she?"

Hector did not reply. A curiously tense expression came into his face as he turned away and leaned over the rail, gazing across the hill-surrounded harbour. I joined him and neither of us spoke. There was an indefinable something in the air which checked conversation. Our thoughts were certainly running parallel. Suddenly he turned to me.

"Walter!" he said. "I'd give anything to be able to apologize for that caddish remark!"

A moment later our passengers and the skipper came on deck. The *serang* made a profound obeisance as the girl came near him. She swept past him like a princess. But the Malay's whistle shrilled with an unwonted alacrity in response to Stevenson's order for chairs upon the poop. That girl threw her spell upon us all.

The three of them sat in a conversation to which we were not invited, and when the tropic night descended with its abrupt suddenness Hector and I went below and turned in to get a good night's sleep before we got under way at dawn.

WHEN our passengers came on deck again we were bowling along at a good six knots. In eight days, with a continuance of this weather, we should make Macassar.

Despite the wind, the morning was blisteringly hot. It was my watch, and, in anticipation of the passengers' arrival on deck, I had already rigged the awning over the poop. The skipper gave a glance at the course, asked what she was doing, cocked his eye aloft, and then, in company with Hanson, went below again. I could guess his intention. The pair of them had been drinking to a late hour the night before. Miss Hanson remained on deck.

Shyness almost paralyzed me as I realized that I was alone with her, for Hector was also below. On the poop was only the Malay helmsman. The *serang* was superintending some work forrard. If she appeared beautiful the previous evening, the girl was a miracle of loveliness that morning. I hardly dared to look at her. Never in my life have I felt myself so awkwardly stupid. Involuntarily, the blood rushed up into my face as she came across to me and opened a conversation. I understand now the fascination that a Cleopatra can exercise over men. My heart seemed to stop beating as she spoke in her thrilling contralto tones.

I forget now what she said. I hardly heard, so focused were all my faculties on the sheer beauty of her face. The confusion of my answers must have amused her, but she betrayed no sign of it. With a sympathy which she made me feel, although unexpressed in words, she led me to talk of my existence, of the places I had visited, of my interests in life. Under the flattery of her smile I opened out like the unsophisticated youngster I was. In half an hour, though my perception of her beauty was every bit as keen—was, in fact, an intoxication in which I lost my senses—I felt that we were old friends. I must have made myself ridiculous with the confidences of my ideals, my ambitions, my illusions, which I poured out without reticence.

She also became dreamily confidential as we leaned over the rail together and watched the blue seas tumbling past our quarter in a smother of foam upon their tops.

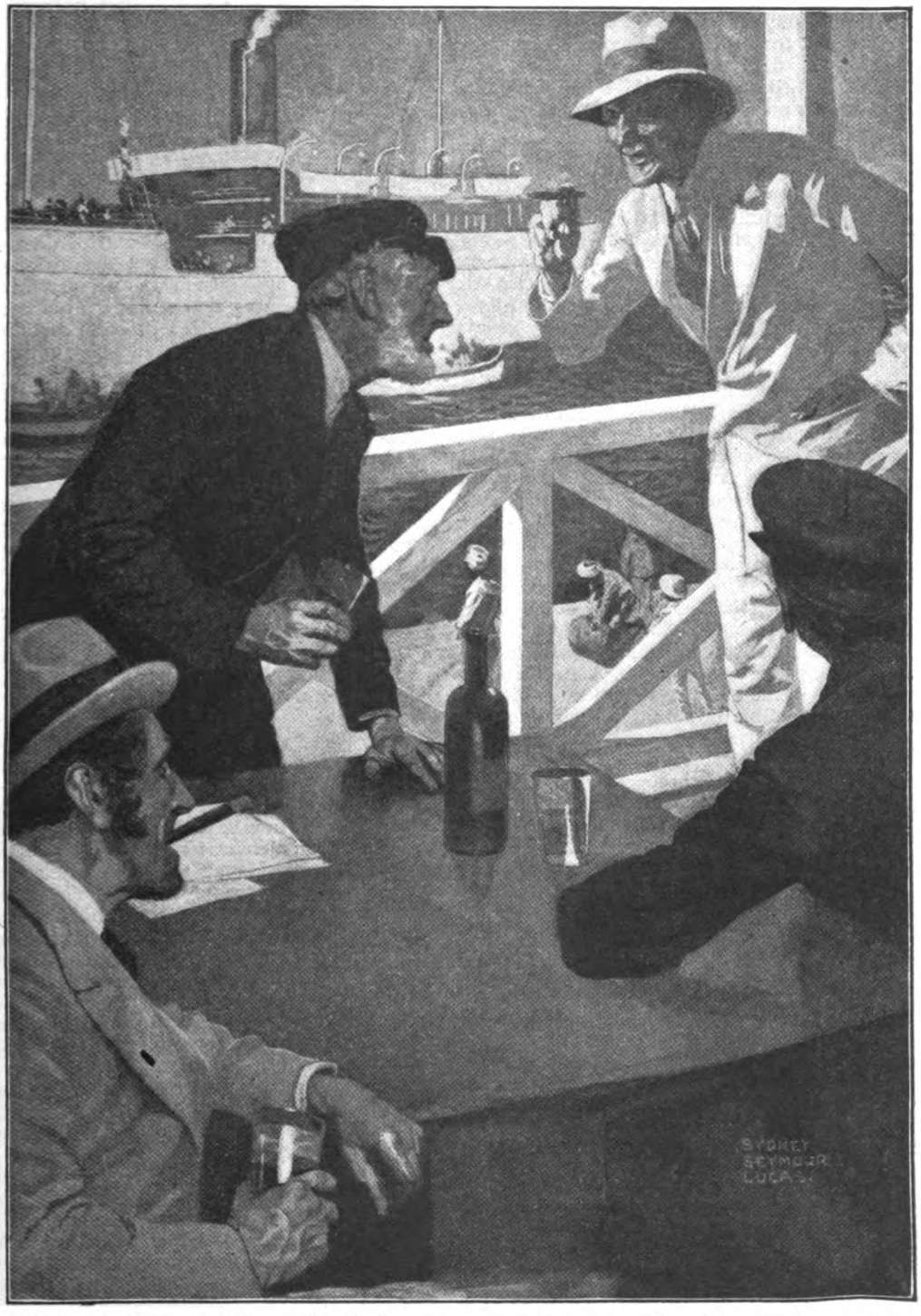
"It is a wonderful life!" she said, slowly, in a sentimental ecstasy, her marvellous eyes turning upon me. "Don't you feel, Mr. Watts, that you could go on sailing for ever between these magic islands, so full of mystery, so full of romance? What undreamed-of adventures could come to one in these fairy seas—so unexplored, so packed with possibilities! Don't you ever feel that you want to discover an island of your own—and be a king in it?"

It was on the tip of my tongue to answer: "With you for queen!" but I dared not give utterance to the audacity. My sigh, doubtless, was eloquent enough.

A moment later my day-dreams were rudely broken.

"What course are we on, Mr. Watts?" It was Hector. The cold abruptness of his tone, recalling me to a relation of discipline long ignored between us, gave me an unpleasant shock. In a moment I realized that the watch was relieved and that, so absorbed had I been in conversation with my enchantress, I had not even heard eight bells. I replied in a tone as frigid as his own. Then, deeply mortified, I withdrew below, full of resentment against my friend, technically justified though I knew his implied reproof to be.

Dinner was a meal in common in the saloon, Hector going to table first, and then relieving me on deck. There was a distinct coldness between us as he took over from me, and the voice in which he immediately gave the order for stunsails to be set was unmistakably meant to be a reflection on my seamanship. I went down to dinner, inwardly raging. Even the welcoming smile of Miss Hanson failed to restore my equanimity, until I



"'Captain Rivers, I believe?' said the stranger. 'At your service, sir,' said the skipper. 'Sit down and have a drink.'"

forgot everything else in the charm of her conversation. She contrived somehow, without actually mentioning Hector, to suggest that I had the preference in her regard. My anger died down in me. I found myself disdainfully pitying my friend's futile jealousy—for jealousy it obviously was.

During the first dog-watch I saw nothing of either Hector or Miss Hanson, and when I came down to tea at six o'clock she had already disappeared from the table. For the next two hours I was busy in my room writing up the skipper's accounts. When, as eight bells were being struck, I passed through the cabin to go on deck, the skipper and his new friend were still sitting at the table with a bottle of whisky between them.

As I emerged from the hatch I glanced round for Hector. He was standing, the girl at his side, leaning over the rail in a murmured conversation, just as I had stood in the morning. A diabolical impulse moved me to come up silently behind them. Maya was speaking in her rich deep voice.

"Don't you ever feel, Mr. Stevenson, that you want to discover an island of your own—and be a king in it?" she said, in a dreamily romantic tone that was only too familiar to me.

For a moment everything swam in my head. A passion of furious, bitter hatred surged up in me and my fists clenched in an almost irresistible impulse to annihilate the friend who had supplanted me—for there was no mistaking the sentiment in her voice, the genuine glow in those glorious eyes she turned upon his handsome face. The fact that she had used the self-same phrase to me only made the sting more savage—I had no mind then for the irony of it. I broke in upon them, controlling my anger to an icy frigidity of manner.

"My watch, Mr. Stevenson," I said, with a sarcasm he well understood. "Are we still on the same course?"

Our eyes met as he looked at me and our old friendship was dead in them.

"Still the same course, Mr. Watts," he replied. "Carry on!"

He moved a little way along the deck with the girl, so as to be out of earshot, and they resumed their confidential attitude at the rail with a contempt for my presence which goaded me into madness. I bent all my faculties to overhear what they were saying. What I could catch of it was mortifying enough to my pride. They were discussing books, the very titles of which were unknown to me, but which were evidently familiar to both of them. I ground my teeth together as I realized the advantages my rival had over me. I made no concealment of it to myself—I was madly in love, more madly, more passionately in love than I have ever been in my life.

I WILL not try to describe the hell of the days that followed. There is no place on earth where human passions are concentrated to such a morbid intensity as in the confinement of a ship. In the enforced propinquity of such a woman as Maya Hanson it is volcanic deeps that burst into eruption. I could not dare to trust myself to speak to her, viewing her, as I did, day after day, in an intimate companionship with my rival which ignored me. There was no mistaking the look in the eyes that rested so often on his handsome face. He, it was obvious, was no less infatuated. Except on duty, we now no longer spoke.

I found myself hating Hector as I never thought that I could hate. Ordinarily, the skipper would have sharply rebuked us both for our evident hostility. It was a principle with him not to have bad blood on board his ship. But now, drinking as he was from morning to night in the inseparable companionship of Hanson, he was too fuddled to notice it. After the third day out he scarcely even came upon the deck, and, of course, Hector and I were never at meals together.

On the evening of the sixth of these miserable days, being alone upon the poop, I was suddenly prompted to go forward to examine the set of the jib. A full moon made a broad silver pathway across the sea and illumined the deck with almost the brilliancy of daylight. As I approached the foremast I saw Namba, the *serang*, upon the other side of it in talk with someone invisible to me. A moment later, with a shock of surprise, I heard Maya's rich voice in earnest speech. *She was talking Malay.* The little I knew of the language was insufficient for any comprehension of her words, but the tone in which she spoke was eloquent both of urgency and confidence. I stopped short, startled, scarcely crediting my ears. To what could that girl be persuading our *serang*—for persuading him she certainly was if there was any meaning in intonation? Whatever it was, she succeeded. I saw the Malay draw the gleaming blade of his *kris* from his sash and, with a low obeisance, solemnly kiss it.

I stepped forward and there, sure enough, was Maya. Her position at the forward side of the mast suggested that she had taken it up deliberately to avoid being seen from the poop. She glanced at me and, with a startled cry, vanished along the deck. The Malay's *kris* had disappeared as by magic. He smiled ingratiatingly at me and acknowledged my order to attend to the jib-sheets with a "Yes, *Tuam*," which was oddly

deferential after the sullenness of his demeanour during the past few days.

So strongly impressed was I by this strange incident, that when at midnight Stevenson came on deck to relieve me I resolved to break the silence which reigned between us.

"Hector," I said, with the awkwardness of a pride reluctant to make the first overture, "whether we are friends or no, there is something I ought to tell you." And I related the occurrence.

He listened with a frowning brow.

"Rubbish!" he replied, brusquely. "Whether we are friends or not, Walter, depends on you. I have no wish to quarrel. But this cock-and-bull story is merely another example of your ridiculous jealousy. The girl is going back to live among natives and she was merely practising the language with the *serang*. To suggest anything else is a gratuitous insult!"

"I suggest nothing," I answered hotly. "I merely draw your attention, as the senior officer, to a mysterious incident which may affect the safety of this ship."

"You must be mad!" he said, with a contempt that was like a blow in the face. "If you knew Maya as well as I do such an absurdity could not enter your head! She is—but it is a waste of words to tell you what she is!"

"I have no desire to hear your opinion of our passengers," I retorted. "I can form one for myself. I speak to you merely on the business of the ship."

"I shall be glad if you will confine yourself to it, Mr. Watts," he said in a tone which ended the discussion.

It was a troubled four hours, haunted by uneasy dreams in the intervals of fitful sleep, which I passed in my bunk. "Thank God," I said to myself, as I turned wearily over from side to side, "in forty-eight hours we shall have landed our passengers at Macassar!" I made up my mind to leave the ship at Sydney. The prospect of another voyage shut up in hostility with Hector was utterly intolerable.

THE next morning little occurred to justify my apprehensions of the night before. I had the watch from four to eight, but I was on deck after breakfast. My cabin was an unbearable oven in the blazing sun which poured down upon us. On deck there was at least a breeze. But, apparently indifferent to the heat, the skipper sat drinking in the cabin with the passenger. The stuff was accumulating in him. He was now beyond the fuddled stage. I heard him roaring out profane old sea-chanties with a complete disregard for the lady on deck.

Wondering how Hanson was taking this affront to his daughter's ears, I glanced down through the skylight. He sat at the table callously unperturbed, his eyes fixed on the foolish old skipper. As I watched him I saw him half fill the old man's glass with neat whisky. His own remained by his side untouched. For a moment all my suspicions leaped up in me. Was he deliberately making the skipper drunk? I dismissed the thought. The idea was absurd. In twenty-four hours we should be landing him at Macassar. They were not gambling. I could imagine no advantage to be derived from such deliberate malice. He was probably merely safeguarding his own head while being sociable with the skipper. So I satisfied myself and turned to look along the deck in alarm for Maya's delicacy. The old man was really going too far in his choice of choruses.

She was in the waist of the ship, side by side with Hector, as usual. As I looked, Namba, the *serang*, passed them, and I thought—I could not be sure—that a quick glance of intelligence lit up the eyes of both. But there was nothing in the slightest degree suspicious in the demeanour of the crew. Namba himself was all activity and respectfulness.

When I went down to dinner, I found the skipper sottishly querulous as he sat with his untouched food before him and a glass of spirits at his side. We were alone. Hanson had joined his daughter upon the deck. Hector had of course relieved me.

The old man looked at me with bleared eyes.

"W-where are we, M-Mr. Watts?" he asked, thickly. "Getting n-near port?"

"We passed the Lauriot Islands at seven this morning, sir," I answered. "We were 4.40 south, 116.30 east by noon observation. Course east-south-east-a-half-east. Wind a point south of west."

The old man nodded his head sagely. However fuddled he was, his seaman's instinct was not obscured. He could smell his way across the ocean in a fog.

The words were scarcely out of my mouth when we were both startled by a sharp cry and the scuffle of a commotion on deck. Simultaneously we felt the ship swing round and heard the patter of feet as men ran to brace the yards to the new course. On that empty sea there was not the slightest reason for such a change. The old man sprang to his feet.

"What in thunder——?" he roared, following his unfinished query by a string of expletives as he scrambled up the companion-way to the deck. I ascended close at his heels.

We dashed out on to the poop to see Hanson standing by the side of the helmsman. The *serang* was down in the waist,

shouting orders to the men at the main braces. Stevenson was not at the moment visible. The girl stood near her father. There was a pang at my heart as I perceived her. Never had I seen her look so superbly beautiful as she was then.

The skipper threw one quick look aloft and sprang to the binnacle.

"Who's changed the course?" he demanded, angrily, after a glance at the compass-card. He looked furiously round the deck for the mate. "Mr. Stevenson!——"

Hanson interrupted him. There was a grim smile on his hard face.

"I changed the course, Captain," he said. "This ship is now under my orders!"

"What!" cried the old man, aghast at this audacity. "You damned pirate, you!" With the blindly-violent instinct of a half-drunken man, he whipped out a revolver and pulled the trigger. Hanson had no time for a movement. With the crack of it he went over, backwards.

There was a wild shrill cry, and, like a tiger upon an elephant, the girl sprang upon the skipper, a flash of steel in her hand. The old man collapsed with a *kris* up to the hilt in his breast.

I STOOD for a moment frozen with horror. Before I could intervene, the girl disengaged herself and, glancing towards me, uttered a sharp ejaculation in Malay. I swung round to see the *serang's kris* poised for a thrust between my shoulder-blades. In obedience, evidently, to her imperative command, he dropped his weapon. A moment later I found myself in the grasp of three of the crew with my hands firmly trussed behind my back. They fastened me deftly to a stanchion so that I could not move. Whatever happened, I was henceforth a helpless spectator.

Then, for the first time, I perceived Hector. He was lying, gagged and bound, at the other side of the hatch. At a word from Maya, he was assisted, still bound, to his feet. The gag was taken from his mouth, but he remained silent. I hope never again to see such an expression on a man's face as that with which he regarded the girl who stood before him.

Horror-stricken as I was, I could not help a thrill of admiration. If ever she looked a queen, it was then. She was complete mistress of the situation. The whole occurrence—apart from the death of Hanson—had undoubtedly been planned. The crew, headed by the *serang*, looked up to her now, in default of her father, as the unquestioned source of authority. She uttered a sharp command in Malay, and two of them flung the skipper overboard with as much indifference as if he were old clothes. Her father's body was removed to the cabin. Then, obedient to her order, the Malays quitted the poop, leaving only the helmsman placidly steering the new course and Maya standing between her captives.

She ignored me as though I did not exist. Her eyes were fixed on Hector. He stood with his hands fastened behind his back, his handsome face stern, meeting her gaze with a look before which even a hardened man might have quailed. But she smiled, smiled with an almost childish triumph.

"Hector!" she said. "Forgive me! Forgive me for not being quite sure of you—it was better that you should be bound. You have ideas I cannot always understand. But now, my beloved!"—she stretched out her arms to him—"now you can be king in your island! King, with me for queen! What is done is done! Think no more of it. Take command of your ship, my king—and let us sail for the kingdom that awaits us!"

Despite the tenderness, the passion in her tone, she was evidently not sure of him. With the inherent wary craftiness of the savage, she took no risks. Hector was as helpless as I in his bonds.

"Answer, O my king!" she implored him. "Answer, that I may cut your bonds!"

Beautiful as she was, Hector, I thought, in that supreme moment, was a match for her. He stood proudly erect, his handsome blond head thrown back, his blue eyes, that could be so fascinating, cold now in an inexpressible disdain.

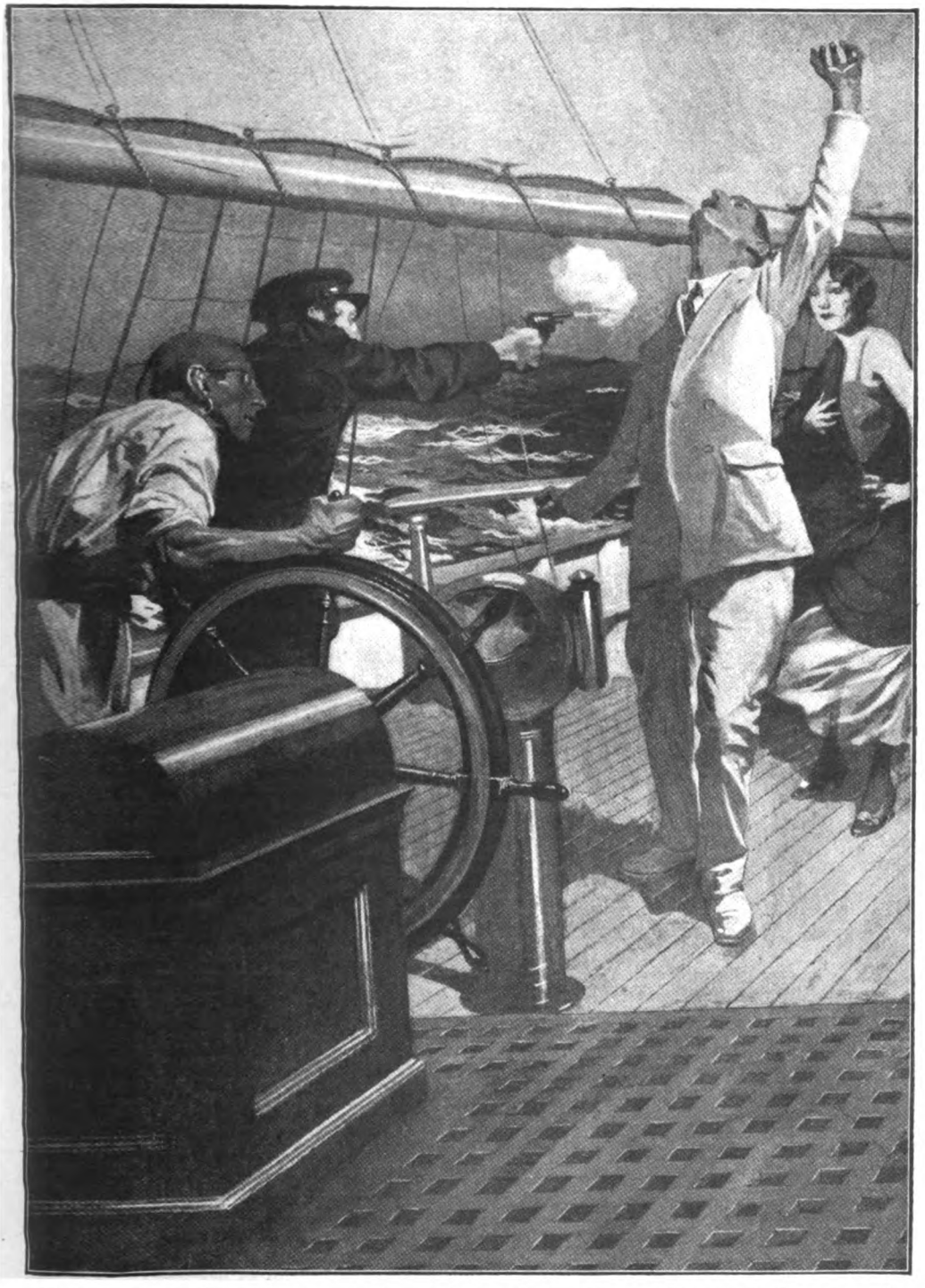
"I will certainly navigate the ship," he replied—"to Macassar!"

"To Macassar?" she repeated, uncomprehendingly.

"To hand you over to the British Consul." Tone and words were explicit.

She laughed.

"Don't play with me, Hector! I mean what I say." Her voice went thrillingly soft as she came close up to him, laid her hands upon his shoulders, looked into his eyes with a melting passion to which the sternest might have succumbed. "Our island—the island of our dreams, of our talks together—is there waiting for us. It was my father's island—and now it is yours, my beloved, my man, my king! Your island and mine for our kingdom of love together! It is there—I can show it you on the chart!" She turned to the *serang*, and uttered a sharp command in Malay. He dived down into the cabin with the alacrity of a slave. "It is there, waiting for us, my beloved, our magic island lost among its spices in a sea where no man can come to us!" Hector might have been marble under her caress. The muscles of his face scarcely quivered. "Remember all the plans we made, the plans that you thought never could come true.



"The Captain whipped out a revolver and pulled the trigger. Hanson had no time for a movement. With the crack of it he went over, backwards."

They *have* come true! I, Maya, your slave, your woman, did it all for you! There is nothing, nothing, *nothing*, I would not do for you!" she finished vehemently, "for you are my chosen king—chosen from the first moment I saw you!"

The *serang* emerged from the hatch with a chart in his hand. She opened it, spread it before Hector's eyes, pointed to some spot on it I could not discern from my position.

"*There!* There it is, my beloved!—there, waiting for us! But you must sail the ship. It is far, far off, that island!"

"The only port to which I will sail this ship," replied Hector, doggedly, "is Macassar!"

There was no mistaking the determination in his voice. She stepped back from him, her eyes flashing, her nostrils quivering with anger. I saw one hand feel for a small *kris* in the folds of her dress.

"You refuse?" she asked, incredulously. "You—you dare to scorn me?"

His look at her was an insult.

"I scorn you," he answered, "utterly! I have no part with pirates and murderers!"

On an impulse of fury she raised the *kris*. He did not flinch. Then she turned from him with a mocking laugh, pointed to me.

"You think without you no one can navigate the ship? You forget your friend there!" An electric shock ran through me as I realized the part I was going to be made to play in this drama. "You forget Walter—Walter, who loves me as I thought you loved me—who would give his soul for what I have offered you!"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Choose, my friend!" she said, angrily. "Choose! One of you is going to navigate this ship—and the other one is going to die!" She came close to him again, felinely seductive. "Hector, my beloved, my man, my king! It is waiting for you, your island of love, waiting for you in a reality where all this will seem only a bad dream, scarcely remembered. Oh, let me choose for you! Let me cut your bonds!"

"You can cut them if you like," he answered. "If you do, I shall put the ship back on her course."

Again anger flamed up in her.

"You play with me! I give you one minute! One of you," she made a gesture towards me, "is going to navigate this ship—the other one is going to die!"

A grim smile came on his face. He glanced across to me.

"I am going to be the one to die," he said, with a cold contempt in which I was included.

For a moment, I thought she was going to plunge the *kris* into his heart. She stood, magnificently barbaric, a prey to contending passions. Then she left him—came across to me.

"You!—you, Walter!" Once more her voice, her eyes, her smile, were a seduction that thrilled me to the marrow. She put her lips so close to me that I could almost kiss them. "You will help me! Oh, you understand! I had to put you both to the test—that fool there!—and you—you with whom I first talked of that island—you whom I loved, too, so that I did not know which to choose. I know now! Walter!" She put her hand on my shoulder, and the touch of it convulsed me. I could scarcely breathe. "I offer it to you—our island—for you to be king over it and me!" Resentment for Hector's contempt of me mingled with the wild craving, overpowering my thinking self, which surged up in me at this propinquity of the woman so inaccessibly remote in all my feverish dreams. This seemed like a dream, itself.

Hector's voice, coldly sarcastic, interrupted her.

"May I remind you, Walter, that we once were friends?"

I did not answer him. Maya's face, Maya's eyes, came between me and him, hid him from my vision. In the atrocious temptation that enveloped me I was speechless.

She held up the chart.

"It is there—that island where a man, a real man, may be king! There, where no one will ever come! Who shall ask of that man how he arrived there?—Walter!" The accent of her voice vibrated through me as she pronounced my name. "Walter!" It was an invocation to my deepest, most primitive being. "Can you not be happy there—*with me?*" Her breath was warm and fragrant on my face as she moved herself sinuously up to me. "Is there a choice?" The savage looked for a moment out of her eyes. "Death—or me—and slaves to do the bidding of my king?" Her change of tone was dramatic in its drop to tenderness. Her eyes held me mesmerized. I tried to think, but no thoughts came. I gasped in a suffocating atmosphere where my physical nerves quivered in a yearning fever beyond my conscious control. There seemed to be a blind force in me, independent of my will. The scene lost reality—that ship rolling in a beam swell under the blazing tropic sun, the group of Malays standing in the waist with every eye focused upon me, and—intoxicatingly close—that beautiful witch of a woman with the glowing eyes in the white face that emphasized the scarlet of her lips. "You will, Walter!" she murmured. Her whole being seemed to come out to me, submerging mine. "You will! You will sail your ship

to your kingdom—to your kingdom and your queen ! "

It seemed another voice than my own which answered :—

" God forgive me ! I will ! "

With an exultant cry, her *kris* slashed free the bonds which held me. I stood on the deck unfettered. On the first impulse, I tried to snatch her into my arms. She evaded me.

" Not yet ! " she cried. " Not yet ! " I fell back before the menace of the *kris*. " Wait ! " She drew herself up proudly. " I am no slave-girl to be taken by force ! First, you shall earn your kingdom ! "

Hector's mocking voice broke in upon us.

" She is fooling you, Walter—as she tried to fool me, she-devil that she is ! "

She swung round upon him, her eyes flashing in all the fury of a woman scorned.

" Fool you ? " she cried. " No ! I spoke the truth—one of you sails this ship—the other dies ! "

His blue eyes never wavered in their cool contempt.

" It would be a wise precaution ! " he said. " For as sure as I live I shall denounce you as a murderess ! " (*)

I walked ac oss to him, moved by an impulse that I swear to Heaven was merciful. I wanted no more tragedies. But the die was cast and I had to abide by it.

" Hector," I said, looking him in the eyes, " believe me, I will be a party to no murders. Keep your tongue quiet. I'll get you put ashore somewhere."

" If you do," he replied, " I warn you I will report you as accessory to this act of piracy ! I want no favours from a white man who can degrade himself to associate with a criminal half-caste Malay ! " The man was deliberately tempting death. I see it now as I did not see it then. In the overwhelming bitterness of his revulsion—in such a nature as his, love must have soared to the highest of ideals—life was impossible to him. He taunted us like an Indian prisoner at the stake. " I ask for no mercy—for, by Heaven, I will show you none—neither you nor that nameless spawn of a villain and a slave-girl who play-acts by your side ! "

I heard a savage snarl behind my shoulder, felt the touch of Maya's body close against mine, felt something pressed against the palm of my hand.

" Don't be a fool, Hector ! " I said, angrily. " You are asking for trouble ! "

" A fool ! " he mocked. " You are the fool. You think she loves you ? *I know !* " I felt again that pressure on my palm ; my fingers closed instinctively over the hilt thrust into them. " *I know !* She-devil, murderess as she is—there is only one man that woman loves—only one man she ever will love—and that man is Hector Stevenson ! " His eyes were an intolerable defiance.

" You lie ! " My voice was a scream of uncontrollable fury. As if moved by itself, my hand plunged the *kris* into his breast.

I staggered from him as he fell like a sack, his hands still bound behind him. The *kris* dropped from my fingers. Horror-stricken at my own act, I turned to look at Maya.

She stared wild-eyed as though suddenly insane. Then she flung herself upon the body.

" Hector ! " she cried, in a voice that curdled the blood. " *Hector ! Mine !* My man ! My king !—You are right, Hector ! I was mad. There is only one man I love ! Only one man I ever can love ! " Her hand groped along the deck for the *kris*. I was powerless, in the shock of it, to intervene. " Hector ! My own ! I come to you !—I come to you ! I come to you in that other kingdom where we shall be king and queen together ! "

With a convulsive movement she thrust the *kris* with both hands into her heart—rolled over upon Hector's body.

I WILL not dwell upon the agonies of mind which overwhelmed me in this frightful tragedy. Prompt measures had to be taken to save the lives of all of us, for all—with the possible exception of the Chinamen—were equally involved, if not in murder, at least in the crime of piracy. I put the ship about and beached her on an unfrequented part of the Celebes coast. We then dispersed. I made my way overland, through many privations, to Macassar with a glib story of shipwreck. None ever queried my sworn deposition before the Consul—none, except that figure of Hector Stevenson, the only friend I ever had, who stands above my bunk at night.

LIKE RUDYARD KIPLING IN THE CASE OF " THE LIGHT THAT FAILED," F. BRITTEN AUSTIN HAS PROVIDED TWO CONCLUSIONS TO " A SIREN OF THE TROPICS." ORIGINALLY THE STORY ENDED AS ABOVE, AND WE LEAVE OUR READERS TO DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHETHER THIS ENDING IS A MORE EFFECTIVE CONCLUSION TO THE STORY THAN THE FOLLOWING, WHICH SHOULD BE READ AFTER LINE 28 ON THIS PAGE, MARKED THUS (*).

THE man was deliberately tempting death. I see it now as I did not see it then. In the overwhelming bitterness of his revulsion, life was impossible to him. He braved her like an Indian at the stake. " As sure as I live I shall denounce you —— ! "

In a blaze of passion, she lifted the *kris*. I gasped in the imminence of the blow. Yet

she stayed her hand in mid-air. Their eyes looked into each other's.

"Kill me!" he taunted. "I challenge you!" A bitter smile came into his face. "You cannot! *You cannot!* And you know why! She-devil, murderess as you are—there is only one man you love—only one man you ever can love—and that man is I!" His laugh was an intolerable insult. "I am the one man in the world you cannot kill!"

She uttered a hoarse, inarticulate cry of fury, and I saw the gleaming blade of the *kris* descend upon him. Horror paralyzed me. I half-closed my eyes in the awful bravado of his laugh, listened for the thud of his body on the deck. The sound was absent. I looked again—to see her slashing free the last strand of rope that bound him.

She pointed to the grating on which the helmsman stood. "Take it!" she said, in a strangled voice. "Take it!—*Overboard!*"

He stood free, unbound, glanced for a moment at the fierce faces of the *serang*, of the Malay crew, as though estimating his hopeless chance of recovering the ship, and then pushed the helmsman roughly off the grating. For yet another instant he delayed, the grating half-lifted from the deck, confronting the now completely savage woman who stood menacing him with weapon still poised.

"I told you!" he said, mockingly. "You could not do it! You could not kill the only man you really love!"

The *kris* trembled in her hand.

"*Overboard!*" she said, thickly. "Overboard!—I give you that chance. Go!"

He turned to me, the same bitter smile upon his face.

"I leave you to your crime, Walter—and much good may it do you! But I tell you this—that woman is not for you. I know her—better than she knows herself!"

She stamped her foot upon the deck.

"Overboard!" she cried. "Go! Or——" and once more the *kris* rose in menace.

With one last mocking laugh, he threw the grating over the taffrail, following it himself. I heard the double splash. The brig held on her course. The crew would not have obeyed my order to go about even could I have uttered it.

She turned to me with a face that was suddenly hard, white, and inscrutable—flung the chart at my feet.

"There is the island!" she said. "Marked in red. Sail to it!"

She went below to the cabin, whither I dared not follow her.

I PICKED up the chart, saw an island marked with red ink in the clusters to the north of Celebes. The die was cast. I went to the helmsman and set a course.

I will not dwell on the days that followed. Maya remained locked in her cabin, only the Chinese steward going to her with food. As the sole officer, I was at all hours upon the deck. For five days I saw nothing of her.

In the forenoon of the sixth—with a palm-crested island directly ahead of us—I went below and knocked at her door.

"Maya!" I cried. "Maya! We have arrived! The island!"

There was no answer, and I returned on deck.

A few minutes later she appeared from the hatchway, beautiful as ever, her barbaric regality, if anything, more marked. She came slowly towards me, an expression in her eyes that I could not fathom.

"Look, Maya!" I cried, pointing to the land. "Look! Our island! Our island at last!"

In the fascination of the prospect, the imminent reality of those feverish dreams which had haunted my every moment, I thought not of the crimes which had brought me thither. I saw only the island, at which the crew, gathered on the deck, stared with as much interest as I. Canoes were putting out to us.

A sharp command from Maya broke into my sanguine thoughts. On the instant, the *serang* and half-a-dozen Malays leaped to the poop. Before I could make a movement, I was flung to the deck and firmly bound.

Maya stood over me, a diabolically malicious smile on her face.

"Many thanks, Mr. Watts, for your skilful navigation. It is indeed the island—*my island!* But never shall you set foot on it. The only white man who might have been king with me is—" she pointed to the open sea—"there! He was your friend. Go and join him! You shall have the same chance!"

She went to the rail and shouted to one of the canoes.

Half-dazed by this cruel shock and the rough handling of the Malays, my transference to the canoe was like a dream. It was hours later when I recovered from my despair, and, realizing that I was unbound, if alone, upon that sea where the island had sunk below the horizon, I set the sail of matting for a course southward.

The next day I was picked up by a schooner to whose master I told a glib tale of piracy and escape.

Hector Stevenson I never heard of again. As Maya said, we had the same chance, and I always believed that he had survived. But for thirty-five years I have sought the only friend I ever had on all the oceans of the globe, and sought in vain. This narrative will explain the bequest with which, as some partial reparation, my executors are charged.

"The UNTOLD STORY."

by

Sarah Bernhardt

ILLUSTRATED BY W.E.WEBSTER

THAT evening Paris seemed to Félice Aumont to be a huge crouching miser clutching to itself all its gold of opportunity and success. The masses of low buildings dripping with wet, the bleak streets, the ridged iron of shutters closed over shop-fronts, were coldly heedless of her, and the occasional glowing windows of a restaurant or the splash of glitter and movement at a theatre entrance were like a jeer.

She was shut out of it all; she was a failure. For days she had been living with that last fragment of courage that is only a dogged obstinacy, and now, suddenly, even that was gone. It had vanished with the breaking of her last five-franc note, and the poor dinner for which she had broken it had not rekindled her energy. Her thoughts shrank from the old round that they still followed, having nowhere else to go. If only she had a few more francs, enough to let her keep trying a little longer! Her father would not give it to her; she could not take it from any of the men she knew; she had nothing more to pawn——

A beggar with a whining baby in her arms peered at Félice and looked away. As she turned from the Boulevard de Clichy into the Rue de Puteaux where she lodged she saw creeping toward her another of the wretched creatures of the Paris streets, a bent old man whose eyes searched the gutters. She recognized him as a cigarette-picker, one of those who, like white worms, crawl about the streets in a ceaseless hunt for cigarette-stubs that, sold to the cigarette factories, keep a kind of life in their wrecked bodies. Félice's eyes shuddered away from him. Not until she was passing him did she see that he did not carry the long iron-pointed pick or dingy sack of the trade; he appeared, indeed, a decent though shabby old man searching for something he had lost. Her relief was like a shock; she hastened past him and into the dimly-lighted entrance of her lodgings.

The gas was not yet lighted on the dark stairways that led up from the courtyard. Félice fumbled in her bag for the precious, expensive box of matches, and lighted one with fingers so unsteady that they dropped it. It fell flaming; she stooped quickly to catch it, and saw on the damp gravel a hundred-franc note. The match went out. In the dark her fingers groped over the pebbles and closed on the sleek bit of paper.

For a moment the darkness pressed on

her eyeballs like something hard; she could feel and hear her heart beating. The hundred-franc note crackled in her shaking hands; hope, courage, ambition flamed again. Then incredulity, the cynicism born of so many disappointments. It could not be true! But the money, spread out beneath the gas-light of the entrance, was real. There was something both exultant and furtive in her clutch upon it, and it was her recognition of the furtiveness that reminded her of the old man she had seen—searching for something he had lost.

"It can't be his!" she said to herself. "Why should I think so? I've found it; it's mine! It means days—weeks—more in Paris. It means another chance—all my future, perhaps. He is old; it can't mean so much to him. If he lost it he doesn't deserve it. Findings are keepings." The thoughts were like a voice within her. It became a shriek of protest as, pushed by something stronger than herself, she went toward the street. "You're throwing away everything — everything!" it cried. "Another ten days—another week, even—may give you all you've been working for. You're mad. Fate gives you this chance. Take it!" She reached the threshold. "At least," the voice continued, "don't give it to him now. Get his name and address; send it to him later. Later, when you are famous and rich. You can send him twice,—five times as much."

"Perhaps," she answered, to quiet that voice—"perhaps he won't be there. If he's gone, I have no way of finding him."

BUT he was there. He had turned and was coming toward her, bent above the side-walk, shielding a match with one hand and turning his head from side to side. A few idlers followed him, and before him ran a couple of ragged children, stealthily searching doorways and gutters.

"You have lost something, monsieur?"

He straightened, with a little stiffness in his back. Beneath bushy grey brows his eyes gazed at her, brown and gay and pathetic as a monkey's; his beard and moustache were neatly trimmed, and there was dignity in his tidy, old-fashioned stock and well-brushed suit. "Yes, mademoiselle. A note of a hundred francs," he said, hopelessly.

Félice drew a long breath. "Perhaps it is this one," she said, and held out the money.

He took in her worn straw hat, her thin cheeks, her plain suit shiny with many pressings. His eyes became fatherly: a half smile slightly moved his grey moustache. "But how do you know, without inquiry, that it is mine? One must not be too trusting in Paris." He indicated with the slightest of glances the faces pressing close around them. "If you would permit me to offer you a glass of coffee at that small *café* across the street——?"

She was trembling, and the thought of hot coffee became urgent as she followed him into the tiny "Rendezvous des Cochers." One of the five tables was vacant; she sank gratefully into the cane chair he held for her, and in a moment the waiter slammed on the stone-topped table two brimming glasses filled with a milky brown liquid.

"It is excellent for the health on nights such as this," said the old man, cheerfully, stirring the sugar from the bottom of his glass with the large tin spoon. "Drink, mademoiselle. And now, attention while I explain to you. My name is François Doret; I live at number nine, Rue de Puteaux——"

"But, monsieur!" she cried. "I also——"

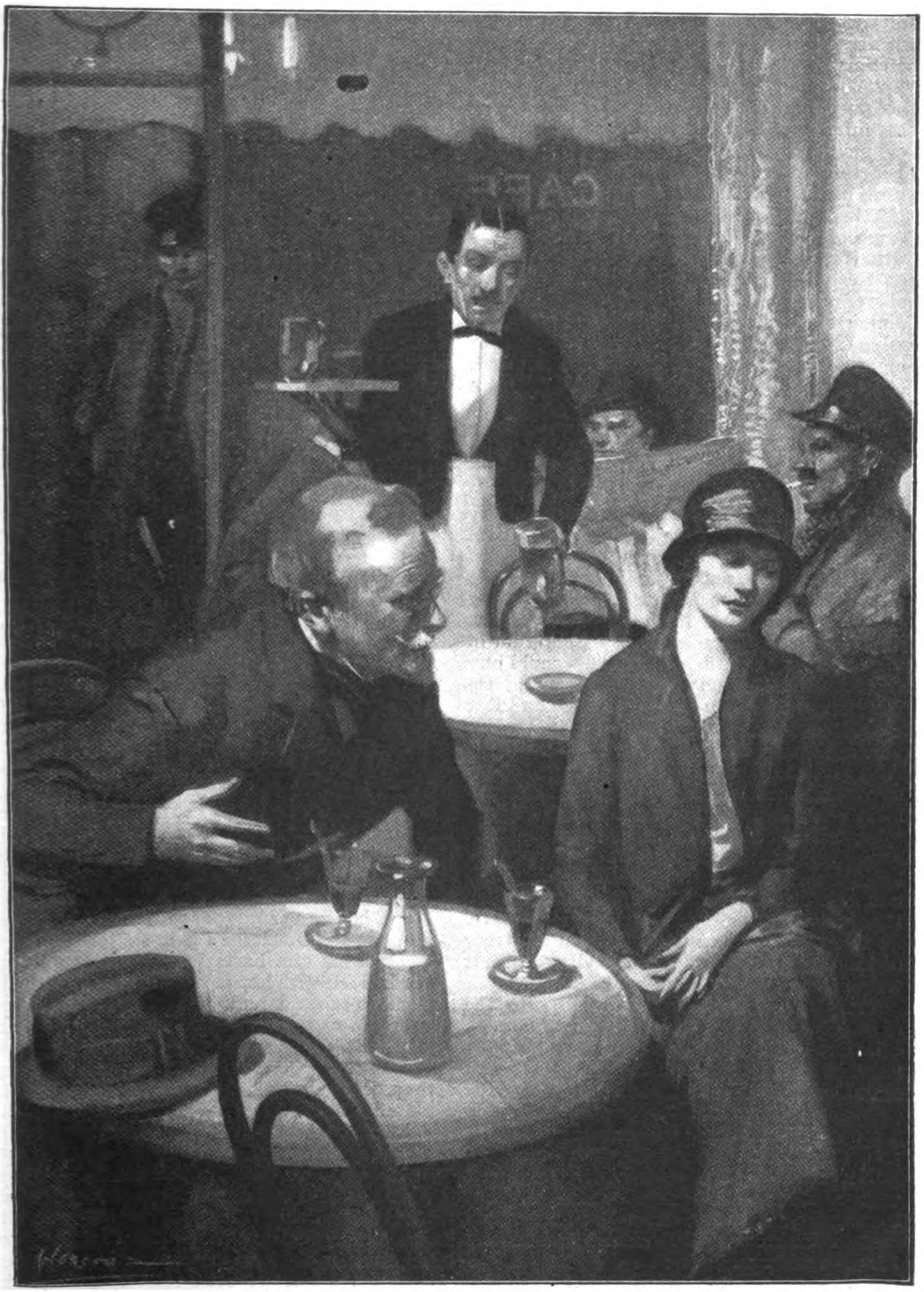
"Attention!" he repeated, snubbing her into silence, and with meticulous detail he recounted all his movements preceding his discovery of the loss of the money. Beyond doubt it was his. The fact having been established, he took it and, folding it neatly, placed it in his wallet. Only the uncontrollable shaking of his hands betrayed his relief.

"And now, mademoiselle, if you will permit an old man to inquire? You have been some time in Paris?"

"Yes," she answered, smiling. "But I—but I do not know it very well." The smile trembled and vanished, leaving her half-averted face wistfully outlined against the smoke-darkened wall. The smooth, dark, parted hair, done in two tight coils over her ears, revealed the lines of a beautifully-shaped head; the drooping eyelids were like two waxy flower-petals, and the crude gaslight on the ceiling accented the shadows beneath high cheek-bones and around the delicate nostrils. Not a pretty face, but an arresting one; a face of intelligence and sensitiveness. The old man gazed at it, maintaining a silence more insistent than a question. "I—have been at the Conservatoire," she added, beginning nervously to button her gloves.

"You no longer find it interesting—this art of the stage?"

"Oh, yes, monsieur, I love it!" she cried, her dark blue eyes suddenly flaming at him. "To capture, in an instant, by a gesture, by a tone of the voice, the poignant meaning of an emotion!—to express—almost to express—the very heart of life itself, more keenly than words, more clearly than music—I—but I can't tell you," she faltered, again self-conscious. "Only, monsieur, it is the greatest art in the world, the art of the stage." Her eyes filled with tears.



"Mademoiselle, you shall have your chance in Paris. I am not rich or powerful, but you shall have your chance."

"You are right, mademoiselle. The greatest art in the world, and the most cruel mistress. I myself am one of its slaves—and victims."

"You, monsieur?" He had accomplished his purpose; she forgot her own troubles in her interest in him. With the pleasure of an old man in a young listener, he told his story. For thirty-five years in a small provincial town he had longed for the life of the theatre. He sketched for her those years: the daily cares of a small business; the brick house with its enclosed garden where pears ripened on the wall; the stuffy, stale, and respectable Sundays on which he entertained at dinner the same people he had always entertained, and the small room in which, late at night, he sat alone poring over Racine and Molière. He had subscribed to *Comedia* in order to read in it the news of Paris theatres; he had done this secretly, guiltily hiding the extravagance from his thrifty wife. He had never hoped to realize his dream. But in one week of epidemic his wife and his two dear children had died, and that tragedy which left him alone had also set him free. At forty years of age, against the protests of his scandalized friends, he had sold all he owned and come to Paris. He was too old to begin acting, but he had gathered franc by franc a sum large enough to keep him in modest luxury until he died. It would buy for him a place in the world of the stage. He had invested it all in a small theatre and lost the last centime. "You see, I was not wise; I thought that the people of the stage were artists and lovers of art. I did not, in those days, know the Theatrical Trust. And now"—he shrugged his shoulders and a gallant smile lifted the corners of his moustache, "for eight years I have been the prompter in the Théâtre Orléans. For a hundred francs a month I sit every night hidden in my hood beyond the footlights, and watch poor actors murder these modern plays. But I am truly of the theatre," he added, proudly. "That to me is satisfaction enough."

Two more taxi-drivers crowded into the dingy place, filled with reek of cheap liquors, imitation coffee, damp garments, and muddy floor. The old man, shifting his chair to let them crowd past him, came back to the present with a start. "But you, mademoiselle, you are young, with your future before you. You will go on and forget this meeting. As for me, I shall never forget. I beg you to remember that François Doret is your friend. It may some day be—who knows?—again the story of the lion and the mouse."

This assumption of her success was too cruel. She struggled for self-control, for the dignity that would let him go with that assumption, but the moment of sympathy after months of loneliness broke down her reserve. "Alas, monsieur, I am the mouse!" she said, with an attempted lightness that failed.

"You have not yet found a part, perhaps?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, quickly. "I have an offer of a small part in 'The Husband Never Knows,' touring the provinces. I—had hoped to stay on in Paris," she added.

"But you must stay on in Paris! Mademoiselle, listen to one who knows. The art of the stage is the art of youth. Your every moment is golden. For a writer, for a painter, age does not matter. But for the actor——! The clear mind, the fine sympathy, the ripe understanding—all that is nothing when the body grows old. You must have your chance while you are young. I beg you to reconsider. Do not waste your time in—what was it?"

"'The Husband Never Knows.'"

"Pah!" he exclaimed in disgust. "Do not do it, mademoiselle. It is suicide."

"Do you think I do not know it?" The cry was from a pain no longer controllable.

"I see," he murmured, thoughtfully turning the stem of his glass. Then his old shoulders straightened beneath the shabby coat, his brown eyes lost their pathos in determination. "Mademoiselle, you shall have your chance in Paris. It is François Doret who speaks. I am no longer young, and I am not rich or powerful, but you shall have your chance."

His eyes looked out commandingly over the sordid room, and at that instant the clock above the bar uttered a whirring sound. François Doret became an anxious old man. "It is late," he said, hurriedly. "I must be at my place in the theatre." Quickly he counted out the copper pieces that paid for the coffee.

At her own entrance again, with her finger on the concierge's bell, Félice turned to watch him hastening down the street. She had felt with him a moment of warmth, the comfort of waifs huddling together in storm-swept doorways; she felt for him now a sad pity. The darkness of the stairs she climbed toward her room was like part of the gloom that descended again upon her spirit. The match she carried in her hand vaguely lighted the stairway, but her little glow of flickering hope had gone out before she slept.

She woke to the thought that had gone with her into an unconsciousness that was not rest. Two francs forty centimes. It was all she had left of the tiny legacy from her mother that, in defiance of her father, she had spent in studying acting at the Conservatoire.

Her courage and hope had once flamed so high that now their ashes were deep around

her. The small room almost filled by the old dusty bedstead, the spotted sateen of the lumpy feather-comforter, the ragged curtains at the long window, and the cracked, pencil-marked wallpaper had never been so sordid. From the depths of herself an unconsciousness welled up, drawing her back for a few moments from the unhappiness of living, and she lay in a kind of stupor that she had not the courage to break.

A KNOCK at the door. She shuddered awake, sat up, throwing the long braid of her hair back over her shoulder. It could not be the concierge; months earlier she had stopped having *petit déjeuner* brought to her room. The knock was repeated more loudly, the door opened, and François Doret came in.

"*Bon jour*, little one! It is a real actress, sleeping so late!" In the pale light from the courtyard window he looked even older than she remembered him; the many shadows of his wrinkles were darker grey on grey skin, but there was a jauntiness in his clipped moustache and pointed beard, and his brown eyes twinkled cheerfully. "Don't mind me!" he went on briskly, as she made a startled movement of drawing the bed-cover to her chin, looking wide-eyed at him above them. "I assure you, many are the great actresses who, among their pillows, have learned their lines from François Doret." In a matter-of-fact manner he removed her folded garments from the one chair to the bed, drew the chair closer, and sat down. "Now, we will talk. First, I have got for you a part in d'Ormange's new play, 'The Untold Story.'"

He sat back, looking at her with pleased anticipation. She put one hand to her forehead, clutching it, unconsciously trying to hold together what she felt was an illusion—a dream, but a dream she wished to prolong. The huge red cabbages on the green wallpaper moved dizzily before her eyes.

"It is not a large part," he went on, satisfied. "I will tell you at once, you have only two lines to speak, and the salary is ten francs a night. But that is something, eh? And there is more, there will be more to come, I promise you!"

She tried, then, to thank him. He silenced her with a brusqueness that could not hide his delight; he was as joyful as a child.

"Now, my little friend, rise and dress. At eleven o'clock I am going to take you to the theatre. You must look your best. But no rouge on that pale skin of yours. A touch of black to the eyebrows, perhaps. And—yes!—a little more colour in those lips. You have a Carnot lip-stick number three? But hasten! It is already ten o'clock."

The day was fortunately bright with sunshine after the rain, already the sidewalks were almost dry, and the impossibility of their taking a taxi was not the handicap it might have been. It was as though the white clouds, the shining shop windows, the coloured leaves that fluttered in the sunlight, shared with them their sense of excited adventure, and François Doret stepped out briskly.

"Ah, these days of autumn that are like spring!" he said, sniffing the moist, fresh air. "They make one think that youth is eternal. But," he went on in suddenly business-like tones, "it is of you that we must be talking."

The situation was simple. Although the principal parts of "The Untold Story" were in rehearsal, the minor parts were not yet settled. A girl had been chosen to play "A Servant," but the day before she had left Paris. François Doret had learned it from the theatre's concierge, had caught d'Ormange on the stairs behind the scenes, and asked him to give the part to Félice. The play then running at the Théâtre Orléans was a failure; "The Untold Story" would be put on next week; rehearsals were being rushed, and d'Ormange, harassed by a thousand details, had answered that the girl could have it if she were not utterly impossible. Almost anyone, however, could open a door and announce a caller; Félice could certainly do it.

"The point is, you must seize the opportunity to make a good impression on d'Ormange and Rochelin, the manager. On the stage, alas, everything depends on personal influence. It does not matter how you play a servant—there is nothing in the part. But make friends. Make friends, and your chance will come."

They turned into a narrow, muddy alley, passed the concierge who sat knitting in the worn stone doorway, and were behind the scenes.

She had only a moment in Rochelin's office. He gave her one appraising glance and said, "All right. Ten francs a night, you understand. Five extra for *matinées*. Leave your address with the book-keeper."

D'Ormange, the famous playwright, had risen when she entered and stood stroking his moustache and looking at her absently. It was the moment she should seize for impressing upon these men her personality, her talent, for arousing their interest in her; she knew it. But she could not. Words on her lips became a murmur which they hardly heard, and she knew when she left that they were barely aware that she had been there.

If only she could act her own character! She could not; she was too genuine. It

was only in a *rôle* that she could both find and lose herself; only through her art that she could reach and fire others. The hopelessness of her attempt to break through the wall of indifference that kept her from her work fought with her courage while she stood unnoticed watching the rehearsal.

Georgina Lamartine, rather too plump, and looking tired and faded in her big coat and round turban of sables, was both acting and helping the director pound the scene into shape. Opposite her stood a sallow, sullen-looking girl, pretty in a smooth blonde style, who went through the scene like a sleep-walker.

"For Heaven's sake, Sylvestre, put some life into it!" the director implored.

"But I haven't any lines," the girl objected. "I only stand and listen."

"But, Sophie," Georgina said, in a voice of strained patience, "there are ways and ways of listening. Try to *feel* the scene. You're the governess; my son's in love with you; I call you in, accuse you of it, order you out of the house. You can't just stand and listen; you've got to show what you feel."

Sophie Sylvestre's lips set; she said nothing. Again and again they went through the scene, word by word, showing her when to falter in a step, when to lift her chin, when to drop her eyes and fumble with a handkerchief. Georgina made suggestions, turned the girl's head with her own hand, went through the gestures herself, while François Doret patiently read Georgina's lines over and over from his prompter's script. As disregarded as a piece of scenery, Félice stood watching. She could not sit down; no one noticed her except when carpenters or scene-shifters ordered her out of their way.

"Well, it will have to do, I suppose," the director said, wearily, at last. "Next rehearsal, eight o'clock to-morrow morning. And be here, every one of you!" He passed Félice, glancing at her. "And you, mademoiselle, are——?"

"Félice Aumont, monsieur. I'm to play 'A Servant.'"

"Oh!" The monosyllable dropped her again among disregarded things. She came out to the colourless daylight feeling as unwanted as a ghost.

FRANÇOIS DORET overtook her at the mouth of the alley.

"Now," he said, while they hastily ate their three-franc dinner in an overcrowded restaurant—"now we begin in earnest. You are to play Hélène; I have decided it."

She laid down her fork, amazed.

"Ask no questions, mademoiselle. It shall be done. To-night we begin rehearsing."

"But——"

"From my prompter's script. It is not for nothing that I have been all my life a lover of the theatre. Already I see such a Hélène as that stupid Sylvestre does not dream. And you—you shall be my Hélène."

"But——"

"You would say that I am not Rochelin. True. In the world of the stage I am nothing, and you—have not yet begun to be someone. There are difficulties; I admit it. But difficulties have a way of removing themselves before sufficient determination. For you, mademoiselle, I shall be determined, for you have made an impression upon me that—but eat, eat quickly, or the waiter will snatch the plate from beneath your nose. Come, let us face the difficulties: one, Sylvestre has the part; two, Vaudré understudies it; three, you do not know it. Well, we take them one at a time."

Félice looked at him with wide eyes. She saw in the little old man with a napkin tucked beneath his chin a revolutionist who defied the whole structure of the French stage. What plot was hatching in the mind behind those kindly, pathetic brown eyes?

"You would—remove—Sylvestre? Vaudré?"

"But certainly! Think no more about it, mademoiselle. There will be a way. One can always catch the wheel of chance at a happy turning. It is your task to become a Hélène—ah! a Hélène to make one weep with emotion! I myself will rehearse you. After that—we shall see."

It was for Félice the beginning of a strange double life. At night in her small sordid room she studied Hélène, while François Doret coaxed, bullied, urged, and argued with her till annoyed neighbours knocked on the walls and demanded quiet. All day she stood unnoticed at rehearsals, watching with a sort of horrified fascination Sylvestre and her understudy, Marie Vaudré. Sylvestre, as second leading lady, was supercilious in her disregard of the negligible "Servant." Marie, in the frankest good-fellowship, shared with Félice her caramels, rouge, stage-gossip, and love-confidences. But Félice felt guilty when she looked at them. She avoided the eyes of François Doret, meekly obeying orders in his prompter's box. She felt that she shared with him a horrid secret, though she did not know what would happen to the two unsuspecting actresses.

Nothing happened. The play went from rehearsal to first night, made a modest success, and continued to run. The weeks went by. Slowly, by a thousand changes so subtle that she did not notice them, the hours she spent with François Doret came to be to Félice her real life. She found in him

a sympathy she had never known; he was at once older and younger than she; he enveloped her with a wisdom born of experience and a delight in living that was for ever child-like. They were still working on Hélène; walking in the streets, in the Bois, dining in cheap eating-places, they endlessly discussed the part, and endlessly she played it for him. They worked out new business for it, read deeper meanings into the lines, timed her gestures, her pauses. He came up with her *petit déjeuner* in the mornings, and sitting on the edge of the bed lectured her on make-up and made her practise voice-inflections.

She did not ask him what his plan was; she almost forgot his earlier wild promises. It was enough for her that they were together; he was her one staunch friend. When one Sunday morning he did not come she was surprised at the pang of loneliness she felt. Trying to keep up her spirits by a brisk walk on the Champs Elysées, she came upon him with a plump, elderly woman, obviously the mother of two sturdy children, for whom he was buying tickets to the merry-go-round beneath the trees. They did not see her, and she passed them quickly.

"Of course," she thought, "he must have his own life, his own interests—I wonder if he thinks of marrying her?" She tried to be happy at the thought of François Doret once more in a home of his own, with children on his knees. But an unaccountable depression settled upon her like a black cloud; that night for the first time she thought of giving up and going home to her father. She kept up her determination with an effort. "I won't be a failure! I will *not!*" she said. "If I have to go on tour next year, I'll do it, but I won't give up. I'll come back to Paris and try again."

FRANÇOIS DORET was busy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday; she hardly saw him. She did not know why she was so unhappy. Then came Thursday—the Thursday that Robert d'Ormange and Georgina Lamartine still speak of as "that awful night." When she came into the theatre Félice knew that something was wrong. The concierge was not knitting; she stood on the doorstep, visibly agitated. The director, striding from the stage where workmen were setting the first scene, dashed up the stairs, frowning. From Lamartine's dressing-room Félice heard his worried voice, "—should have news of her by this time."

"Of all the exasperating——!" cried Georgina's voice. The dressing-room door opened, and Robert d'Ormange stood in it, looking back at Georgina, whose maid was trying to do the star's hair. "On this night, of all nights!" he exclaimed, with a gesture of despair.

Félice climbed the last two flights of stairs that led to the general dressing-room, which she shared with the supers who played guests in the ball-room scene. She opened the door on a babble of chatter. Sylvestre was not in the theatre. A messenger had been sent for her. Einstein was in front—Einstein, the great American manager!

"It's Vaudré's chance," someone said, enviously.

"You can't tell yet. Sylvestre may show up. Serve her right if she didn't, the conceited thing!"

"D'Ormange is wild. He's trying to sell the play to Einstein."

"Einstein's sailing next Saturday."

"Ah! Then he's choosing between this play and Rambaud's. He saw Rambaud's last night; I got it straight from a friend in the cast."

"What a situation!"

Félice wanted to sit down, but all the chairs were taken by the others, who were crowding each other for mirror-space. Could it be that François Doret——? But no! Impossible! Still she began to tremble.

The door opened, the call-boy's head appeared. "Vaudré here? Anybody know where Vaudré is? *Diable!*" The door slammed.

"What! No Vaudré either?" Those who were made-up ran down the stairs. From below there were sounds of slamming doors, hasty feet. The whole place was electric.

"Never was such a day!" cried one of the girls, dashing back into the room. "The *matinée* will be called off. Sylvestre's gone no one knows where. Vaudré's not here. Einstein's in front. The house is sold out. D'Ormange is cursing. Lamartine's furious. It's five minutes to the curtain, and Lambert's having a fit in the wings."

The call-boy leaped panting up the stairs. "Aumont! Aumont here? Lambert wants you. Quick!"

She was struck suddenly by the terrible panic that only actors know—the grip of a cold like ice, the contraction of the throat, the nausea as of sea-sickness. She left the room, followed by curious stares. Director Lambert, d'Ormange, and Georgina were on the first landing, outside Georgina's dressing-room. The star scrutinized her sharply; d'Ormange fixed anguished eyes on her while he worried his moustache; the director faced her with a terrifying frown."

"I'm told you've been understudying Hélène. That right?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Think you can go on and play it?"

Félice swallowed hard. She still felt that deathly cold. "Yes, monsieur."

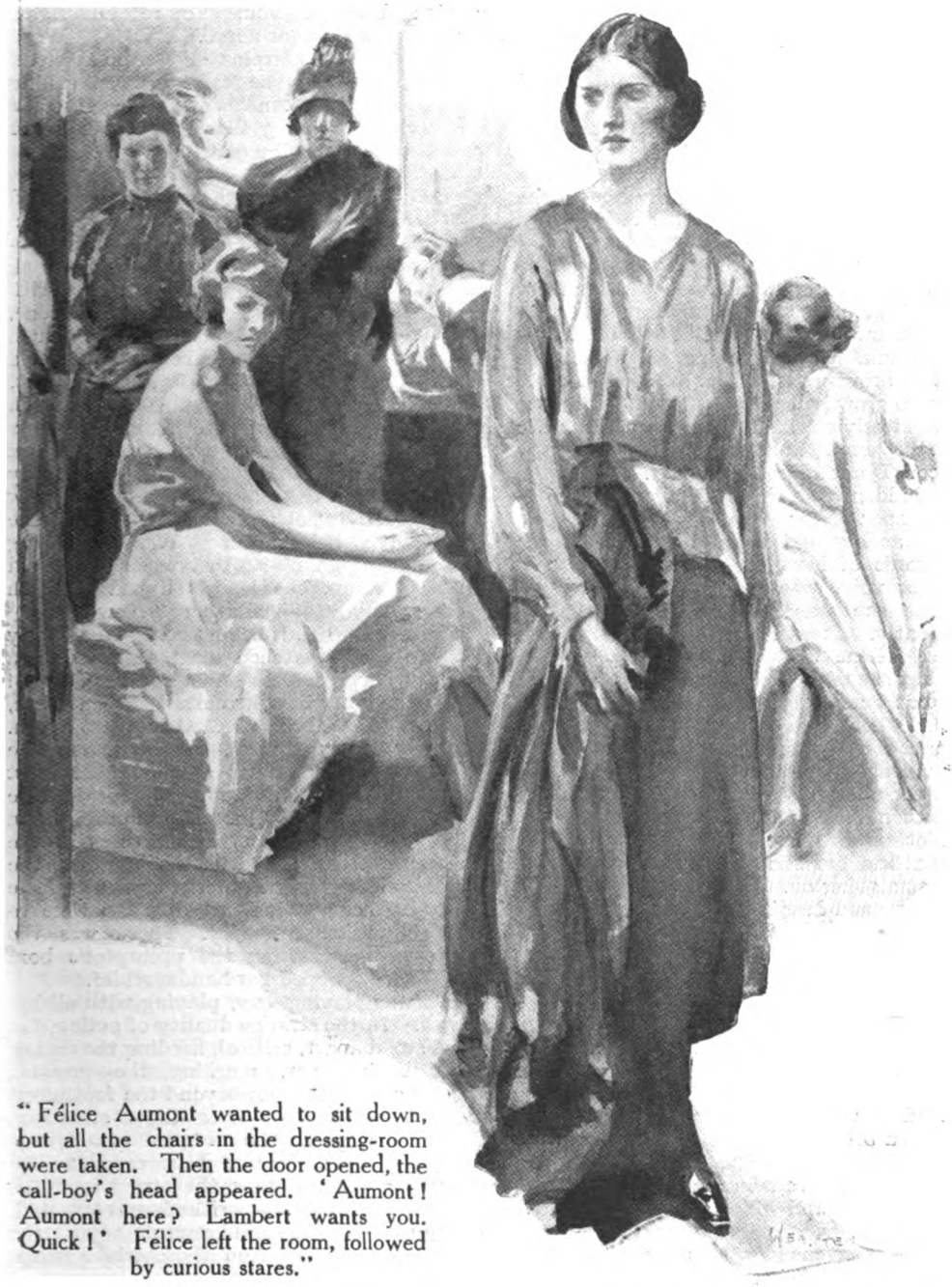
Lambert turned to Georgina. "She doesn't seem altogether a fool. I'll try to pull her through," Georgina answered his look.

Lambert turned to d'Ormange. The author threw his hands in the air. "What can we do? I've got Einstein out there," he said.

"Go on, then, and do your damnedest!" commanded the director, and Georgina at once took charge.

"Can you get into Sylvestre's clothes? I'll lend you my maid. Marie! Come, quickly! Bring pins and my make-up box. Hurry!"

The audience was becoming restless. Lambert was holding the curtain. In Sylvestre's dressing-room Félice feverishly



"Félice Aumont wanted to sit down, but all the chairs in the dressing-room were taken. Then the door opened, the call-boy's head appeared. 'Aumont! Aumont here? Lambert wants you. Quick!' Félice left the room, followed by curious stares."

made up, while the maid knelt at her feet ripping hems and pinning them up and Georgina adjusted ribbons and gave stage-directions. "Don't lose your head. If you forget your lines, keep still and I'll gag." A stage-hand was being got into a footman's costume and coached in Félice's two lines; Lambert was driving a ball-room guest through Vaudré's part. The audience was beginning to stamp its thousand feet in deafening unison beyond the motionless curtain.

Félice, trying with shaking hands to paint her lips, heard the three raps. Lambert appeared white and bright-eyed. "Ready? You go on in two minutes."

She went down the stairs. It all seemed unreal, except the terrible cold that filled her veins. Her brain was still as a block of ice. She was wrenched with nausea; her palms were wet with cold sweat. She stood like a suicide facing death, and when her cue came she gathered all her forces with the suicide's desperation.

Then she was facing the glare of the footlights. The set, the actors, the rows of blazing lights, seemed to retreat, to grow small in infinite distance. Her mind was quite blank. Eternities passed. Then she saw two brown eyes. They seemed to come closer, to grow larger, to fasten on her a gaze like a steadying hand. And with a little jerk the scene became real; she saw François Doret's head above the level of the stage, hidden from the audience by the little hood-shaped box; she saw him smiling quietly at her and heard him whisper the first words of her lines. She caught them up; her voice went on with others; in a moment she was playing Hélène, easily, confidently. It was as though she had always played Hélène for those brown eyes. She felt that she was pleasing them. She made her exit smoothly, and a sudden noise startled her like an earthquake. The audience was applauding. She had forgotten the audience. Another chill struck her, and she stood clinging to the stairs, unable to climb them, bathed in cold sweat.

"Not so bad, not so bad!" Lambert was patting her shoulder. Behind her the scene was going on. She climbed the stairs. On the second landing she was seized by a furious Sylvestre. "What do you mean? How dare you?"

"Let me go," she stammered. Lambert came bounding up the steps.

"Leave her alone!" he ordered Sylvestre. "She's got to change for the second act."

"Second act!" cried Sylvestre. "I'm here."

"And you think we're going to play one act with a brunette Hélène and the rest with a blonde soubrette Hélène, eh? What do you mean, being Heaven knows where when the curtain's rung up? You're fined a hundred francs."

"Great heavens!" the unhappy actress shrieked. "Just because an idiot of a concierge——"

"Haven't I enough to bear already? Silence!" roared the director.

Félice escaped into Sylvestre's dressing-room, panting. Georgina's maid began undressing her. Through the thin walls she heard Sylvestre's hysterics dying away down the corridor. Georgina dashed in. "Quick, Marie! I need you. You're all right, Aumont; keep your nerve. *Diable!* What a day!" The hairpins slid from Félice's shaking fingers. The call-boy was calling the second act. Another shadow beneath her eyes—Number 3 Black, François Doret had said—it was all a delirium.

SHE was on the stage again. She stood before Georgina, who was talking. This was Georgina's big scene, the climax before the entr'acte. Félice stood with her back to the footlights, listening to the words with which the hero's mother dismissed Hélène, the governess. Her hands were clenched, her nerves taut; through her mind flashed a thousand scenes with François Doret, in her room, in the subway, beneath the leafless trees of the Bois—moments innumerable in which they had worked out every second of this scene. She was ready—ready—her tightening nerves cried for release. Had he forgotten, there in the hidden box behind her? Was he letting the moment go by? Just when she could bear no more, she heard slipped beneath Georgina's voice his whisper, "Now!"

She put her hands behind her. How many times she had watched them, reflected in a mirror, sharply white against her black dress! She turned the handkerchief between them, rolled it into a ball, plucked it apart again. And she began to feel, coming across the footlights like something tangible, the interest of the audience, that current more subtle than electricity and more stimulating than wine. Georgina, with the alertness of the experienced actress, felt the change, the slipping of her control of the audience; she keyed-up her playing, altering the tone to one of greater intensity. There was the faintest whisper from the prompter's box. And Félice dropped her handkerchief.

She was playing now, playing with all her power. In the strange duality of acting, her mind stood apart, critical, heeding the signals from behind her, marking the growing tensity of silence from beyond the footlights. But all her heart was in those straining, tortured fingers, the fingers of Hélène, disgraced, lost, beaten with cruel words. They tore at each other, they tried to clutch at self-control, they writhed and twisted. Georgina, baffled and angry, keyed the scene up and up. And those white hands followed her lead and took it from her, became separate living things, part of a woman's soul.

Georgina finished on the highest note of emotion she could reach. Just for an instant Félice lost that contact with the audience, hesitated, felt herself going to pieces in a rush of panic, and for the first time François Doret

spoke in his prompter's voice: "Steady, Hélène."

She took three steps, and turned. Now she was facing the footlights. Tears, real tears, were on her cheeks, but she held her chin up. "Very well, madame," she said, and in those three words she reached and over-topped Georgina's climax. Then she went out and closed the "practicable exit" door behind her.

There was a silence, a silence stretching out and out, it seemed interminably. Then, as though from one collective heart, a thousand sighs made one deep breath over the house, and the applause broke. It broke in a pandemonium of sound that was like breakers dashing against the descending curtain. Hidden by the canvas, Georgina dropped her pose and became a furious, panting woman.

"The Devil! That was my scene, *my* scene! That unknown conceited chit of—of—of an amateur——! Lambert! Where's Lambert?"

"Take your curtain! Take your curtain!" Lambert begged frantically. The applause roared in again upon the stage; Georgina stood bowing, smiling. The curtain descended; beyond it the applause roared on, dimmed but unceasing. Up went the curtain again; Georgina and the leading man bowed to each other, bowed to the audience, bowed again to each other. And again, and again, the hungry applause roared beyond the canvas wall.

"Take her out. Good God, what else is there to do? Listen to them!" cried Lambert.

"Never! Never! Not while I live!" stormed Georgina. "Turn the lights on them!"

But not even the flashing on of the lights stopped the thundering.

"She can take it alone, then," Lambert threatened at last, and Georgina surrendered. Once more the curtain rose, and Georgina graciously led forward a shrinking Félice. She stood stunned by the noise, by the glare, terrified by the fury in the star's eyes; she bowed once, twice, she bowed low to Georgina, who smiled upon her; the curtain mercifully descended.

"As for you," said Georgina, "we'll talk when this is over." She swept up the stairs, spreading panic behind her.

TREMBLING in the chair before Sylvestre's dressing-table, Félice stared at her mirrored face, dead-white beneath the make-up. How could she get through the next two acts? She had made a mortal enemy of Lamartine. Oh, if only she could see François Doret!

She began taking down her hair. A knock at the door stopped her heart-beat and then set it racing. He had come! She rose to meet him, and stopped, startled by the entrance of d'Ormange and a tall, hawk-nosed stranger whose eyes burned with excitement.

"Mademoiselle Aumont, permit me to introduce M. Einstein." D'Ormange's voice was vibrating like a violin string under a firm bow.

"I am delighted, monsieur." Félice extended her hand. The stranger shook it as though she were a man, and this completed her confusion. He began to speak rapidly, and she looked helplessly at d'Ormange; she did not at first realize that the great Einstein thought he was speaking French. Then he broke into English—"I know acting when I see it, by Heaven! You speak English?"

"Unhappily, no, monsieur."

The great Einstein made a gesture of irritation, and instantly switching his whole attention upon his own throughts, he stood silent. It was a rudeness no Frenchman would have committed, yet Félice forgave it. When he spoke again it was in English, and through d'Ormange's rapid translation his words came to Félice, as astounding and incredible as a miracle.

"What's a language more or less? Anybody can learn 'em. You can act—that's the big thing. Look here, miss. I've bought the American rights in this play, and I want you to come over and play Hélène—the new Paris star, brought over by Einstein in the great French success, 'Nobody Knows.' 'Nobody Knows'—that's what I'll call it! By George, that was straight inspiration! Well. Now Mrs. Einstein and I are sailing for New York the day after to-morrow. You come with us; my wife speaks French; you spend the summer over there learning English and rehearsing, and we open next autumn. Of course, I'll want a five years' contract. What do you say? What does she say?" he appealed to d'Ormange.

"But, monsieur! I—I must have time for—for reflection," she stammered. "The day after to-morrow——" Amazingness of these Americans! How could one decide—in three days——? Her whole life altered, suddenly becoming wild, bizarre as a fairy-tale—America, land of towering buildings and sky blazing with electricity—François Doret would know what she should do.

"You can learn enough English in six months, can't you?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"You haven't any folks to object—a husband or anything like that?"

"Oh, no, monsieur!"

"All right. Think about it overnight,

and see me at the Ritz to-morrow morning at ten. I'll have my secretary there; he talks French. We'll fix up the contracts." He shook her hand again, and was gone. The call-boy was calling the third act.

She found only exhilaration in Lamartine's rage, which was still smouldering. She played Hélène through to the end, beautifully, smoothly, sure of herself and happy. She felt that current of sympathy from the audience that makes the actress more than one woman, adding to her emotions the sorrows, the joys, the hopes and loves of that thousand-hearted being beyond the footlights. She played for love of all those hearts that felt with hers, for love of all the beauty and pain and struggles of humanity, for love of her art that expresses them all, and for love of the brown eyes that watched her from the prompter's concealing wooden box.

When the final curtain fell on an audience that, hatted and cloaked, still lingered to give her one more thunder of thanks, she was surrounded. D'Ormange thanked her, kissing her hands; Arlette d'Ormange hugged her and kissed her cheeks; Lambert praised her; even Lamartine laughed good-naturedly: "You're a mean little minx, and you've broken every law of the stage, but long life to you—so long as it's not in the same cast with me!" François Doret, his prompter's script beneath his arm, stood in the shadows of the wings, and she ran to him. "You've done it all—I owe it all to you. Oh, wait for me—wait just a minute till I change. I want to walk home with you."

HE was waiting when she ran down the stairs again. He was pleased, she saw, by her refusal to let the d'Ormanges take her home in their car. She tucked her hand in the crook of his arm and they walked together beneath the orange-tinted foggy sky of the Paris midnight.

"You were indeed my Hélène."

"I owe it all to you. I can't—think——"

"You are happy?"

"Oh! Happy!"

"That is enough."

He said nothing while she told him about Einstein, but when she had finished he spoke at once, with a hard briskness.

"You must take it, of course. It is a marvellous opportunity. You will come back; you will be a great star—one of the greatest, my dear. You will also become rich, for they roll in money, these Americans. Do not forget that. To-morrow you will ask Einstein for many, many dollars in salary; he will bargain, but insist and he will yield, for dollars are less to them than francs to us. My little friend, your feet are on the road to success, and I am glad."

She remembered something. "How did you do it, my friend?"

"It is nothing. But, if you must know—I have become the friend of the concierge where Sylvestre lodges. It was a small matter of kindness to her two children. For that, she arranged that by accident Sylvestre's door locked itself, and when the messenger from the theatre arrived, this innocent concierge said that Sylvestre was not there. *Voilà!*"

"But Vaudré?"

"That was Rambaud's affair. He wished to sell his play to Einstein, and when I let him know that there was no Sylvestre—after all, Vaudré preferred a good supper and a few banknotes. She could not play Hélène, and knew it. Rambaud is now chuckling at the thought that the Théâtre Orléans was dark to-night."

"Oh, François Doret! You are a Machiavelli! And when I think that you did all that for me——"

"Do not think of that, little girl. Think of your future, for it will be great. It is only art that lives; and as for me, I have at last given something to the art of the world. And now, you must go to your bed and sleep well, for this morning you will see Einstein."

They had entered the small dark courtyard where she had long ago found the hundred-franc note. Her heart ached; she put out her hand as if she would cling to him.

"But—I do not want to go without you," she said, like a child. "You—can't you come with me? I will speak to Einstein, I will insist—you will come to America, too! We will see it all together——"

He took her hand and pressed it to his heart. His voice was steady and grave. "No, little girl. Do not think of me when you talk to Einstein. I shall stay here, content. I shall read of your progress, of your fame—not every old man will be as happy as I, my dear."

She had a glimpse of the tragedy of age, the tragedy of life itself, since all life is a growing old and every moment is another farewell to youth and spring. Tears stung her eyes. She put an arm around his neck and kissed him. Many years later, when the world was at her feet, she understood how he had cared for her, and was glad she had given him that kiss.

But she never knew that when her gaslight had flamed up in her small, dreary room, when she stood gazing in the mirror and seeing radiant visions in the eyes that looked back at her, François Doret in the courtyard below was looking up at the yellow oblong of her window. The tears were in his eyes then; the yellow oblong blurred and wavered.

"Although I am old," he thought, "my heart is young. I wish she had not kissed me like a daughter."

A novel in the making—Mr. Oppenheim dictating to his secretary

E·PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

An Interview by SIDNEY DARK

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS SPECIALLY TAKEN FOR "THE STRAND MAGAZINE."

IT has been said that success is "one of the greatest of a great man's qualities." Certainly most successful men whom I have known have thoroughly enjoyed their success. There is, of course, a common affectation to pretend that no success is worth having, that the game is not worth the candle, and that the prize is always a Dead Sea apple. But this is generally nothing but a kindly pretence intended to solace the unsuccessful. Sometimes, of course, success is so hard to win and the struggle so long and strenuous that, when the goal is reached, the power of enjoyment has departed. But this is the exceptional case. The rule is that success is a very jolly thing to have, and the jolliest sort of success is that which comes to a man whose work brings pleasure and enjoyment to his fellows.

I know no man who more obviously enjoys or more thoroughly deserves success than E. Phillips Oppenheim, the novelist, whose well-conceived, well-constructed stories are so familiar to readers of THE STRAND

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MAGAZINE. Oppenheim is a man of fifty-four—of middle height and, in these days, tending to stoutness. But his stoutness is not that of the over-fed, under-exercised townsman, but merely the common evidence of the approach of comfortable middle life. Oppenheim, indeed, like so many other successful writers, is essentially a countryman. For twenty years he has lived away from London, in Leicestershire, in Norfolk, and more recently in Devonshire. Oppenheim is a keen open-air man, an excellent shot, a good golfer, and addicted to sea fishing. He flourishes best in the bracing air of the East Coast, and he found the atmosphere of the West a little enervating and, he says, a little depressing, though I am bound to confess I find it hard to believe that he can be depressed anywhere or in any circumstances. Anyway, he has recently given up his Devonshire home and now lives at Woking, with a little flat in Mayfair, conveniently situated over a famous Bridge club, Oppenheim being, among other things, a conspicuously good bridge player.

As I have already suggested, the quality of the man is cheerfulness. He meets you with a smile that has nothing whatever to do with "company manners." He smiles while he gossips. He smiles when he says good-bye—not the uncomfortable smile that makes you feel that he is glad you are going, but a flattering smile that makes you feel sure that he will be glad when you come again. His most striking feature are his light blue eyes, rather out-of-the-way, steadfast eyes that, as eyes always do, tell a good deal of the man's character. There is a suggestion of the practical in the manner in which his eyes fasten on you as he talks, and Oppenheim is eminently a practical person. He was brought up to be a business man, and he was a business man until he was thirty-five. Even then he did not really cease to be a business man. The modern English writer is generally conspicuously clever in obtaining the full pecuniary reward for his work. If Barabbas is still a publisher, he must certainly be a semi-bankrupt publisher. Men like H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett see to it that they obtain all that their work is worth, and Oppenheim has the same justifiable habit. But while his eyes suggest this business acumen, they also indicate the amazing imagination of a man who can write novel after novel without ever repeating incidents or making characters mere imitations of their predecessors.

Oppenheim's first novel was published when he was twenty years old. He has therefore been writing fiction for thirty-four years, and during this time he has published no fewer than seventy separate books, novels, and collections of short stories. In a review of his first novel, "Expiation," a writer in the *Athenæum* compared the story to those James Payn used to write before he discovered he had humour. Oppenheim has made the same discovery since. Thirty years ago Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, with his Sherlock Holmes series, invented the idea of writing a number of short stories each having the same leading characters. Phillips Oppenheim at once realized the advantage of this scheme from the point of view of the story writer. It meant economy in invention. And he was one of the first writers to develop the Conan Doyle idea. Another advantage of a series of short stories with the same central theme is that they make a far better and more interesting volume than a number of stories with different characters, different plots, and written in different veins.

OPPENHEIM'S first story was a sufficient success to convince him that it was worth while to continue writing fiction. He sold the serial rights of his second story for fifty pounds, and two years afterwards he received an offer for the serial rights of a story of two hundred and fifty pounds from the proprietors of the *Sheffield Weekly Telegraph*. Oppenheim told me that he remembers that, when this offer came to him, he felt that his fortune was made, and indeed it may be said to have been the beginning of his fame. He continued to write serials for the *Sheffield Weekly Telegraph* for fifteen years, and he recalls the long association with almost affectionate gratitude for the consideration and encouragement he received.

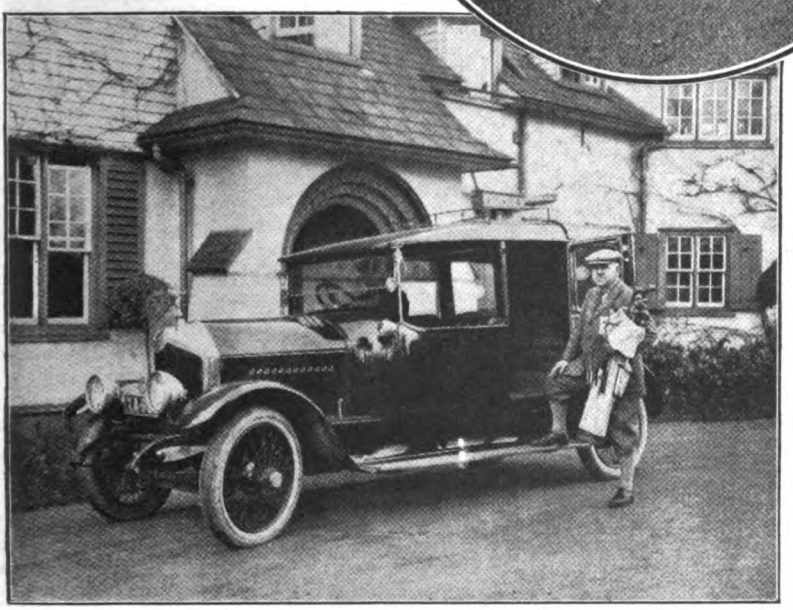
Oppenheim's father was a leather merchant, and after his death his son was compelled for some years to assist in the direction of the business. But in this, as in almost everything in his life, fortune dealt him the winning cards. His business associates appreciated his talents and made it easy for him to devote a certain part of his time to fiction. But it was not until he was thirty-five that he was able to retire from business and to devote himself entirely to literature.

I have used the word literature designedly, because the Oppenheim novels have a distinction that makes them different in kind to the rut of popular fiction. The drama is always well stage-managed. Incredible coincidence is rarely, if ever, employed. And the writing has form and style. It is remarkable enough that one man should have been able to turn out two novels a year for over thirty years. It is much more remarkable that there should be no falling off in the character of his work, and that, on the contrary, his last work should generally be his best. Oppenheim told me that his latest novel, "The Great Impersonation," is the greatest success that he has ever had. For six months it

was one of the six " best sellers " in America and it has had a corresponding sale in this country. Unfortunately, it frequently happens that fiction of the smallest artistic value produces the most satisfactory pecuniary results. "The Great Impersonation," however, has pleased the critics as much as it has pleased the great reading public. Sir William Robertson Nicoll calls it a " mighty yarn," and he says :—

" There are no difficulties in the way of accepting its statements and situations. These are followed out with the most marvellous and meticulous skill. There is not a weak spot in the working out of a difficult and delicate plot. The triumph, however, of the book is its conclusion. The solution of the mystery is reached at last, just as the reader has settled down to believe that there is no mystery at all."

I have quoted this eulogy from a critic of unrivalled authority since it indicates one of Phillips Oppenheim's greatest qualities. His situations may be outside the common experience of his readers, but they are never incredible. He may deal with improbabilities, but he always persuades that the improbabilities are at least possible. Sir William Robertson Nicoll says that he has written " one of the greatest yarns in the English language." Phillips Oppenheim is modest about his achievements, and certainly does not talk readily about his success, but he will admit that he is above all other things a story-teller, and he suggested to me that it is because, unlike the needy knife-grinder, he always has a story to tell that his books are so popular in the United States.

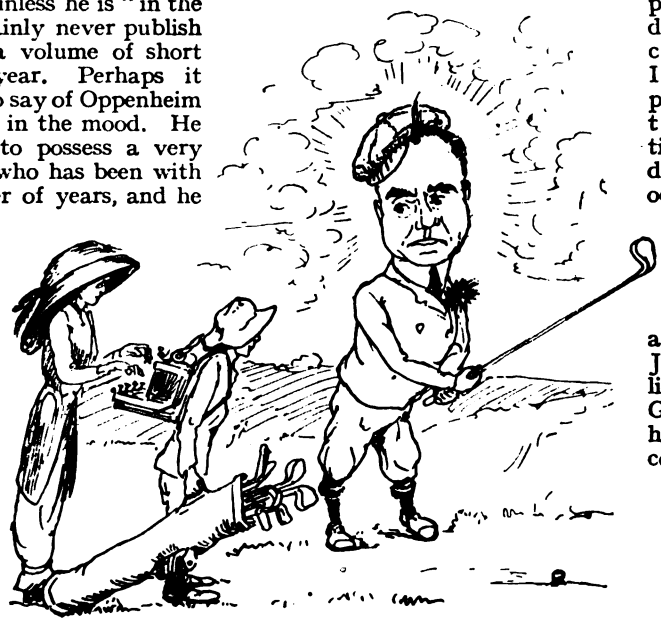


E. Phillips Oppenheim at his Woking home.

" The Americans," he said, " are great story readers. I don't think they are much interested in modern introspective fiction.

They love colour and movement and situations. Give them that and they are satisfied, and, of course, if you have skill to add to that they are still more delighted. Joseph Conrad and W. J. Locke are the two most popular English novelists in America to-day, and both of them, whatever else they may do, write novels with a full-blooded plot."

No man could have an output equal to Oppenheim's without persistent industry. The novelist who waits for inspiration, and who can never write unless he is "in the mood," will certainly never publish two novels and a volume of short stories in one year. Perhaps it would be truest to say of Oppenheim that he is always in the mood. He is lucky enough to possess a very expert secretary who has been with him for a number of years, and he dictates to her everything that he writes. Sometimes the secretary takes down in shorthand. More often she typesstraighton to the machine. The novelist's favourite position, while he works, is to sit hunched up on a low easy chair. When he is in the country he will generally work from about a quarter past nine to twelve. Then he will play golf or tennis for an hour or so, returning to work early in the afternoon and going on until nearly dinnertime. On a good day he will dictate about five thousand words, and an average day will mean about four thousand words. Every third or fourth day he takes a holiday and does no work at all.



We've dined full many a famous guest
Within this happy home,
And for each literary fest
We've hammered out a pome.
The mill has creaked and groaned with toil,
Producing just a verse;
The subject was quite bad enough,
The product was still worse.

We never had a cinch in rhyme
Till you turned up, O Oppenheim.

An American Caricature.

In the popular novel the situation is certainly a greater asset towards success than the characterization. It is what the characters do rather than what they are that interests the readers. It might therefore be supposed that the successful popular novelist would begin by conceiving a series of situations, and that he would afterwards invent characters to fit those situations. Oppenheim tells me that his method is exactly the opposite. He begins a novel with two or three characters, and then (to use his own phrase) he lets them rip. When he begins his novel he rarely has any idea what will happen to the characters, what will be the chief situation, what will be the curtains. The characters being created in his brain, he spends his life with them, has them with him as his partners or opponents at golf, takes them with him when he goes out fishing, even has them with him when he goes to bed—always trying to find out what such people would do in certain circumstances. It often happens, he told me, that two entirely different developments occur to him, and he then has to decide what is the most likely and the most appropriate. Just as in real life — to quote George Eliot's hackneyed couplet:—

Our deeds still follow from afar,
And what we have been makes us what we are,

so the actions of the Oppenheim characters in Chapter One of each of his novels really determine what they shall do in Chapter Two, and so on until the end of the story. The intrigue being constantly in the novelist's mind, he is able to dictate his stories rapidly and sometimes for hours on end almost without hesitation. When, however, the dictation is finished, the stories are very carefully revised, and Oppenheim says that the revision generally takes much longer than the original dictation.

Oppenheim recalls, with perhaps a little satisfaction, that in his "The Maker of History" and other novels he foretold war between Great Britain and Germany ten years before the Great War broke out, and that he did something to back Lord Roberts in his insistent endeavours to persuade this country to prepare for what he believed was

an inevitable conflict. Germany, Oppenheim says, realized the part he had tried to play, and he was among those who were destined to be shot had the Germans succeeded in imposing their will on England. So repeated was this German note in his novels that, when war actually began, one newspaper said that it had at least robbed Oppenheim of his vocation. During the war he was among the many novelists who assisted in the work of the Ministry of Information.

"I suppose I must admit," he said, "that my name suggests a German origin, and perhaps it is of some interest that my father and his father before him were both born at Faringdon, in Berkshire, and that I have hardly ever been in Germany in my life."

I asked Oppenheim if he felt that the English reading public was becoming more critical, and if he had noticed any change in public taste during his long, successful career.

"Of course," he replied, "the world is always changing. I myself am very different from the man I was twenty years ago, and I suppose my work must be different too. I fancy that the reading public in England is more exacting than it was, that it is quicker in detecting blunders, that it is more intelligent and critical. My appreciation of these facts leads me to take far more care with the revision of my stories than I used to do. It is a care that I give very willingly, for nothing is more stimulating to a writer than to realize that he will be read critically, and nothing can be more delightful than the whole-hearted appreciation of a really critical public."

Within recent years a number of the Oppenheim novels have been turned into picture plays, and the development of the cinema marks a new era in the novelist's career. I asked him if he found that the picture plays founded on his novels were very unlike the original.

"There are," he replied, "I suppose, inevitably many additions and alterations. At present I know hardly anything of the conditions under which picture plays are produced, and I am having the thrilling experience of learning a new art."

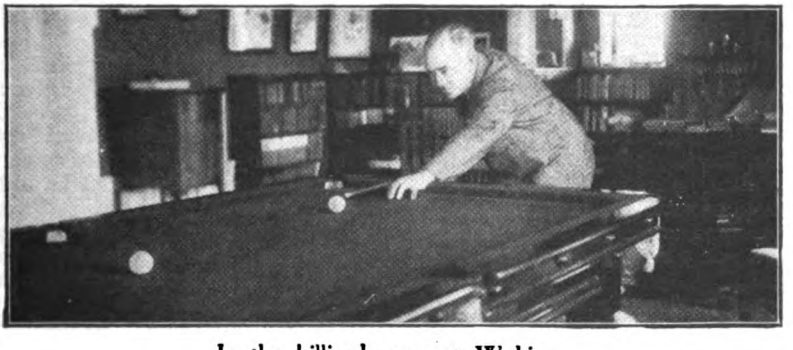
Oppenheim was recently asked by a famous firm of American film producers to supply them with an original plot suitable for a picture play. It was an entirely new task for him. I have already explained that he lets his stories develop from the characters, and that he never begins, as many novelists begin, with a sort of synopsis of the plot. But this is exactly what is required for a picture play—a story told on six pages of foolscap, and told in such a way that it can be cut up into scenes and repeated in pictures instead of in words. Oppenheim confessed that he was delighted to have a new experience, and he added, with his characteristic twinkle, that he understands that his picture play plot has been approved by the authorities.

"Instead of the picture play being made from the novel, as has happened until now with me, the novel will be a sort of development of the picture play, for I certainly intend to use the theme of the play for one of my forthcoming novels."

"If this were to become the rule," I said, "don't you think that the limitations of the cinematograph might have serious and, on the whole, very evil effects on the art of fiction?"

"It is very possible that they might. I am not sure, for the whole thing is quite new to me. But I am conscious of the possibility, and for that reason I am determined, however my cinema work may develop, to continue to write novels which will begin as novels, and which shall be conceived and worked out as novels."

Oppenheim recalls with pride that Sir James Barrie is one of his most faithful admirers. Sir James has all the Oppenheim novels specially bound in similar bindings.



In the billiard-room at Woking.

Mr. Cray's Adventures

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Illustrated by S. ABBEY

No. 6
SATAN AND THE SPIRIT

THERE was not the slightest manner of doubt that Mr. Joseph P. Cray was thoroughly enjoying himself. He sat on the ledge of his box at the Albert Hall, his legs dangling in mid-air, a paper cap with streamers upon his head, and the full joy of living in his blood. At times he played weird ditties upon a tin whistle. At others he threw with unusual skill streamers of gaily-coloured paper half-way across the floor. His cheery, good-natured face was aglow with happiness. He exchanged greetings right and left with perfect strangers. He was at once a notable and a popular figure.

"Yankee Doodle bought a poodle," shouted the Shah of Persia, as he passed with the Queen of Sheba.

"Har, har, har! Var, var, var! Rah, rah, rah!" yelled Mr. Cray.

A little peal of soft laughter close to his ear startled him so that he nearly lost his balance. A filmy grey figure, masked so that only her soft dark eyes were visible, was leaning by his side. She seemed to be enveloped by floating billows of misty tulle which at no place betrayed the dressmaker's art—a human body moving in a filmy cloud. Her eyes, upturned to his, gave the only clue as to her age and sex, and Mr. Cray found them wonderful.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," he asked, "were you laughing at me?"

"Of course I am," a soft, mysterious voice answered.

"Guess I'm making some noise," he reflected.

"I like it," was the whispered reply. "Are you very happy?"

Mr. Cray was a little taken aback.

"Just trying to make the thing go a bit," he explained, with a wave of his hand. "Nothing like a noise at a show of this sort. I'm a dandy hand at throwing these streamers. Have a try."

The figure shook her head slightly but crept a little nearer to him. Mr. Cray was both attracted and intrigued.

"What might you represent?" he asked, diffidently.

"I am a Spirit," she confided. "This moment you see me—a moment later I shall have vanished."

"Don't hurry," Mr. Cray begged, anxiously. "What about a bite of supper?"

"Spirits never eat," was the reproachful reply.

"Or drink?" he suggested. "I've got a few bottles of Mumm 1906 in here. There's some *pâté*, too."

Mr. Cray's attention was momentarily distracted by the passing of some temporary acquaintances, with whom he indulged in a few vociferous amenities. When he had finished, he found to his dismay that his companion had vanished in a most mysterious fashion. He was conscious of a momentary pang of disappointment.

"Some voice, that," he ruminated, "and gee, her eyes! Guess I'll get down and look for some of the crowd."

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He was on the point of descending when a soft tapping at the door of the box caused him to change his mind. Somehow or other, the tapping seemed to him as distinctive as the voice. He swung around and opened the door eagerly. The Spirit stood there.

"Come right in, ma'am," he invited, cordially. "Say, this is fine! Take a chair and I'll open some champagne."

She floated in and seated herself, looking more than ever like a grey mist. Her eyes remained upon him while he served her with supper. There was a sort of subdued rapture in her expression, as though she found something almost worshipful in the portly and corpulent figure of her host.

"How's that seem, young lady?" he asked, finally. "A wing of chicken, *pâté* and biscuits on the small plate, and a glass of the boy, eh?"

"It is very kind of you," the Spirit replied. "I did not come here to eat. I came to be near you."

"Say, that sounds good," Mr. Cray murmured, a little embarrassed—he was scarcely used to such complete conquests.

"You are so full of life," she sighed, "so full of splendid and actual vitality. You remind me—ah!"

She broke off and attacked her chicken. She also sipped and apparently approved of her wine. Mr. Cray cheered up. The Spirit business had been getting a little upon his nerves, and he welcomed these signs of indubitable humanity. He filled his own glass and raised it.

"Here's health, wealth, and happiness!" he ventured, in the words of a popular song. "Chin-chin!"

The Spirit sighed, but drank. Then she toyed pensively with her empty glass, which her host promptly filled.

"Health, wealth, and happiness," she repeated, her eyes becoming mistier than ever. "I will drink with you because you wish it, but these things are not for me."

Mr. Cray, adopting the *rôle* of a man of respectful gallantry, possessed himself of her hand. He was ashamed to realize how relieved he was to find it warm and soft and human.

"See here," he remonstrated, "aren't you overdoing this Spirit business a little? This is a dance, not a funeral. What about a turn on the floor when you've finished that? I'm not a great performer, but I guess there are others."

She looked at him sadly. Her fingers still rested in his comfortable hand.

"I can only dance with one," she sighed, "and you are not he."

"That's too bad," he protested, "especially on a night like this. Husband, eh? Lover?"

She shook her head more mournfully than ever.

"It is someone who claims me," she declared, "who seldom lets me wander far out of his sight. He terrifies me—but I belong to him. Listen!"

Mr. Cray obeyed.

"I don't know that I can hear anything

"Mr. Cray filled his glass and raised it. 'Here's health, wealth, and happiness!' be ventured."

unusual," he confessed. "Music and laughter and popping of corks sound a pretty good chorus to me. Come," he went on, glancing at his watch, "it's close on midnight—what about taking that mask off, eh?"

He stretched out his hand, but she eluded him, flitting away into a corner of the box. Once more she was listening.

"Can't you hear—a sound like the rushing of the angry wind, like footsteps upon wool up in the hills? A voice—listen! Seboa! Seboa!"

There certainly was a voice, although what it was saying was undistinguishable. A masked Satan, in brilliant scarlet, was standing in front of the box. Mr. Cray addressed him affably.

"Were you looking for a Spirit, sir?" he inquired. "She's in here. Step right up and have a glass of wine. I guess this is your friend," he added, turning round to his guest.

Satan made no reply. His eyes were fixed upon the shrinking figure in the corner of the box. As though in obedience to his unspoken command, she passed out and joined him. A moment later they were gliding across the floor, their feet moving to the music—a strange, almost sinister combination. Mr. Cray mopped his forehead, poured himself out and drank another glass of wine, and, stepping out on to the floor, passed his arm round the waist of the first disengaged damsel he came across, and plunged into the revels. But nowhere could he see any signs of Satan and the Spirit.

IT was one of the most successful masked balls of the season, and after midnight the fun waxed fast and furious. Mr. Cray found many friends, and entertained hospitably. His curiosity concerning his acquaintance of the early part of the evening, however, remained unabated, and he scanned in vain every one of the boxes, and searched every corner of the dancing floor for a sign of her smoke-grey draperies or the more easily distinguishable scarlet of her companion. He came to the conclusion at last that they must have left early, and he was puzzled to find that side by side with his disappointment was mingled a certain feeling of relief. Mr. Cray was an ardent materialist, and he had no faith in spirits. Her soft voice, with its strange suggestion of coming from some greater distance, and the aroma of mystery by which she had contrived to surround herself, repelled just as much as it had attracted him. He could not make up his mind, therefore, whether he was relieved or disappointed when, during his first period of rest for some hours in the temporarily deserted box, he heard her voice just below the ledge.

"Are you alone?" she asked, softly.

"Sure!" Mr. Cray replied. "Come right up."

Once more she disappeared for a moment and then drifted through the doorway, curiously impersonal, her draperies concealing with matchless art all suggestions of the human figure. She still retained her mask.

"Say, that's against regulations!" he declared, pointing to it. "Masks should come off at midnight. Just let me fix it for you."

She shrank away.

"My mask must not come off," she murmured.

He made a pretence at insisting. She pushed him back. She seemed nervous and terrified, her eyes shone.

"I am in earnest, please," she begged. "Just let me sit here and be near you. Don't speak to me. Don't take any notice of me."

She sank into a secluded corner, and Mr. Cray poured out a glass of champagne, after which he scratched his chin and sat watching her thoughtfully. Her partiality for his society, coupled with her aloofness, puzzled him. Mr. Cray hated to be puzzled.

"I don't quite get you," he admitted. "You don't seem looking for any fun like all the others. What made you come to such a place as this, any way?"

"Don't ask me, please. If you must know, I came because another wished it."

"Chap in scarlet?" he suggested, genially.

She shook her head.

"It was not he—it was Seboa," she told him, in a whisper which scarcely reached his ears.

"Don't know the lady—or gentleman," Mr. Cray admitted; "but, any way, what made you come back to me again? It isn't the wine, because you're not drinking it. You don't seem to want to talk, either."

"It's your vitality," she told him, nervously. "You are full of life—strong, human life. It warms me."

Mr. Cray edged a little farther away.

"I guess this is a stunt I'm not up in," he murmured, weakly.

"Of course you don't understand," she went on, after a moment's pause. "I seem to you like other women, because I eat and drink and dance—but I am not. My life all ebbed out long ago. I belong—somewhere else."

Mr. Cray moved to the farther end of the box. He thrust one leg over its ledge.

"Guess I'll go and collect some of the crowd," he muttered. "You make yourself quite comfortable and stay just as long as you like."

"Don't go," she begged. "Don't leave me."

Mr. Cray hesitated. He was a good-natured man, and the little quiver in her voice sounded very human.

"I'll stay if you take your mask off," he suggested, "and leave off getting at me."

"You shall see me without my mask within a few hours," she promised, "but not here—not now. Please—please stay. This is my dangerous hour."

"Is it?" Mr. Cray murmured, making this time for the door. "If you'll excuse me, I'll just——"

"Dangerous to me, I mean—not to you," she interrupted. "Please do not go. I am afraid of drifting off—of losing myself. My hold upon this frail body is so slight."

"Drink up your wine," Mr. Cray suggested, a little helplessly. "Let me give you a sandwich."

"Oh, you don't understand!" she moaned.

"I'm with you there," he assented, heartily. "I don't."

"How can I explain?"

"I'm not particular how you do it," Mr. Cray replied, "but I've kinder got the idea that you're playing some game on me, and if you're not feeling like putting me wise, I'd just as soon, without wishing to seem inhospitable, that you quit it."

She began to tremble.

"But I don't want to go," she protested.

"Then stay right where you are," he replied, "and I'll take an amble round myself and see how things are looking."

"Would it help you to understand," she asked, "if I told you who I really am?"

"I guess so," he assented. "My name's Cray—Joseph P. Cray, of Seattle, when I'm at home—and I don't take any stock in spooks."

She leaned a little forward. Her eyes glowed as though with wonder of her words.

"I am Seboa," she whispered—"Christine Seboa. Ah, how horrible!"

THE box was suddenly and riotously invaded by a horde of a dozen or more revellers. The duties of hospitality for a few moments absorbed Mr. Cray's whole attention. When he looked around, the chair in the corner was empty.

"Hallo! Anyone seen my little cloud drift out?" he demanded.

There was a peal of laughter.

"He means his little sunshine," a fluffy-haired Columbine declared, passing her hand through his arm. "I'm here, dear. No cloud shall ever come between us."

"Say, that's a comfort, anyhow," Mr. Cray acknowledged. "But honest, didn't you see anyone here when you came in—a small person in a kind of grey, billowy muslin, or floating stuff of some sort?"

There was a moment's blank silence, then a roar of laughter.

"Cray, old bean, you're seeing things," hiccoughed a young scion of the Stock Exchange, temporarily gorgeous in ruffles and lace.

"The box was empty save for your gracious self," a flushed and bedraggled Hamlet declared, with his mouth full of sandwich. "To that we can all attest."

"Anyone ever heard the name of Christine Seboa?" Mr. Cray inquired, keeping a tight hold upon himself.

"Christine Seboa?" a monk, who had hitherto been silent, repeated. "She was a wonderful Danish medium, who nearly sent New York crazy last year."

"And where is she now?" Mr. Cray asked.

"She died last November," the monk replied.

Mr. Cray poured himself out a glass of wine, spilling a few spots upon the tablecloth.

"Here's confusion to all spooks!" he exclaimed, drinking it off. "Now," he added, snatching up his trumpet, "let's get outside and make a noise."

They sallied out. The monk, however, detained his host for a moment after the others had departed. He looked around as though to be sure that they were alone in the box.

"Mr. Cray," he said, "you flatter my disguise."

"Not for one second, Inspector," Mr. Cray replied, with a smile. "I'm not quite fresh enough, though, to go bawling 'Scotland Yard' all over the place."

"I apologize," the monk declared.

"Anything special on?"

The monk shook his head.

"There are always one or two of us at these affairs," he said. "I've spotted a couple of well-known thieves already, but there's nothing particular doing. They know we're here all right. I was interested in that name I heard—Christine Seboa."

Mr. Cray looked uneasily around.

"She kinder got me guessing," he confessed.

"Christine Seboa," the monk went on, "was not only a very wonderful medium, but she was also a great collector."

"Of what?"

"Jewellery—anything she could lay her hands on," the inspector replied. "It was not until after her death that she was even suspected. They say that she must have got away with a quarter of a million pounds' worth of diamonds from New York alone."

"You're not taking any stock from the fact that she called herself a medium, I suppose?" Mr. Cray inquired.

The monk scratched his chin.

"Men like you and me, Mr. Cray, sir," he said, "who take an interest in crime, are bound to be materialists. Still, I've learnt in my profession never to be obstinate about anything. There are a good many intelligent and well-informed people who believe in spooks, and I am telling you frankly that this Christine Seboa had, without doubt, some exceptional gifts. They say that she could hypnotize a strong man in three minutes."

"You're sure she's dead?" Mr. Cray asked.

"So far as our information goes," the monk replied, "she died in New York last November."

"Then I don't mind telling you," Mr. Cray confided, "that this little bit of grey cloud who's rather got on my nerves this evening—some eyes she's got, but she kept on behaving like a half-baked spook — told me just before you all came in that her name was Christine Seboa."

"That's interesting," the monk acknowledged. "Let's have a stroll round and see if we can see anything of her."

Three times the two men made the circuit of the hall, in vain. The Spirit had disappeared.

"'Cray, old bean, you're seeing things,' hiccoughed a young scion

MR. CRAY stood on the steps of the Albert Hall at four o'clock that morning, paused for a moment to take breath, and sent a mighty volume of raucous sound quivering through the early stillness.

"Rah, rah, rah! Hah, hah, hah! Rah, rah, rah!"

There was a little commotion amongst the unfortunate bystanders. A pleasant-faced officer in uniform, who was standing on the step below Mr. Cray, with a muffled-up form upon his arm, started as though he had been shot, and nearly dropped the kit-bag which he was carrying.

"For Heaven's sake," he exclaimed, looking over his shoulder, "what are you making that noise for?"

"I want my automobile," Mr. Cray explained, cheerfully. "I've got an American chauffeur who knows the old college call. I guess he's heard me."

"I should say he has if he's this side of the Strand," the officer commented, dryly.

"He's not only heard it but here he is," Mr. Cray observed, complacently, as his limousine stole up through the tangle of vehicles and drew up to the steps. "That's worth a shout, eh?"

There were many in the waiting crowd who looked wistfully at the car, for a drizzling rain was falling and taxi-cabs were scarce. Mr. Cray looked round at the officer and his companion and addressed the former.

"Can I give you a lift anywhere, sir?" he asked. "I'm going to the Milan Hotel, but I don't mind a bit out of my way as long as it isn't entirely in the opposite direction."

The officer stepped forward almost eagerly.

"If you could give my wife and me a lift as far as Moon Street, Chelsea," he said. "it would be awfully good of you. I ordered a taxi-cab, but I'm afraid he's gone off with someone else. My wife's terribly tired, too."

"Step right in," Mr. Cray invited, hospitably. "Tell the chauffeur your number, Captain. Let me give you a cushion, ma'am. Pretty tiring—— My God!"

They were all three in the car now, the officer with his head out of the window, directing the chauffeur. A black domino had up to the present concealed the whole of the lady's form, but the eyes, glowing so steadily into his through the folds of her black lace mantilla, were unmistakable. The faintest of weary smiles played upon her lips as she gazed into Mr. Cray's thunderstruck face. The officer withdrew his head from the window.

"Major Hartopp my name is, sir," he said. "I can't tell you how grateful my wife and I are."

"Joseph P. Cray is my name," the other rejoined. "I've come across your good lady before this evening."

"Yes," the Spirit murmured, sleepily, from her corner; "Mr. Cray was very kind to me. He gave me wine and let me sit down in his box."

of the Stock Exchange, temporarily gorgeous in ruffles and lace."

"And I understood you to say that your name was Christine Seboa," Mr. Cray observed, too eager for some measure of elucidation to be anything but ruthless.

"I am Christine Seboa," was the reply, spoken in a dull, hollow tone. "The whole world knows that."

Mr. Cray glanced across at his male *vis-à-vis*. Major Hartopp sighed slightly and shook his head, with a warning glance towards the figure at his side, and Mr. Cray, understanding his gesture to mean that his wife was to be humoured, relapsed into silence. The car turned southward, passed down Sloane Street, and plunged into the purlieus of Chelsea, finally pulling up at what was apparently a pleasant, little-frequented thoroughfare.

"You must come in and have a whisky-and-soda," the young soldier insisted, hospitably.

Mr. Cray shook his head.

"I guess it's too late," he replied. "Besides, I'm just as well without any more liquor."

His new acquaintance, however, would take no refusal, and eventually they all descended from the car and passed through a cheerful little hall into a small morning-room, where a bright fire was burning in the grate. Decanters of whisky and brandy, and several siphons of soda-water, were arranged upon the sideboard. The Spirit came no farther than the threshold of the room. She stood looking at Mr. Cray with strange and mournful intensity.

"Good night," she said. "You have been very kind to me."

"Say, won't you take off that mask for a moment before you go?" Mr. Cray begged. "I'd like to be able to recognize you when we meet again."

She shook her head very slightly. Her husband frowned across at her in good-natured annoyance.

"Look here, Mina," he protested, "why don't you do as Mr. Cray asks? I'm pretty sick of the thing myself."

"I cannot," she answered, simply. "I have promised."

"Rubbish!" her husband answered, testily. "There isn't anyone to promise."

"Good-bye, Mr. Cray," she said.

"Good evening, Mrs. Hartopp," he replied, with a bow. "I'd like it first-rate if you and your husband could fix it up to take dinner with me at the Milan one night."

"You are very kind," she murmured, and drifted away.

Major Hartopp drew a little breath of undisguised relief at the closing of the door. He drew up an easy-chair to the fire and almost pushed his guest into it. Then he mixed him a whisky-and-soda of generous proportions, served himself also with liberality, and sank down upon a couch opposite to his guest.

"Mr. Cray," he confided, "I feel that I owe you an explanation."

"I wouldn't go so far as that," his *vis-à-vis* replied, "but I must admit that your good lady puzzled me some."

"Do you know anything about spiritualism?" Major Hartopp asked.

"Not one darned thing," Mr. Cray acknowledged.

"Neither do I, but it seems that my wife, before I married her, was a medium."

"Holds converse with spirits, and that sort of thing?" Mr. Cray ventured, dubiously.

"Worse!" his companion groaned. "Spirits actually take possession of her, enter into her body, speak with her tongue, crush out her own personality and obtrude their own."

"You don't say," Mr. Cray murmured.

"It seems that she has a personality or spirituality which very few human beings in the world possess," his companion went on. "Hers, they tell me, is one of the few bodies in the world accessible to the sympathetic dead. They seem to have a taste for revelry, too. One of them always weighs in if we are going to a dance or anything of that sort. Christine Seboa turned up at eight o'clock this evening, just as we were settling down to dinner. Completely spoilt the whole pleasure of the dance for me. I hate spooks."

MR. CRAY studied his *vis-à-vis* for several moments with half-closed eyes. Major Hartopp was to all appearance the perfect prototype of the well-bred, simple-minded, moderately intelligent young British soldier. He had a slight ruddy moustache which went well with his sunburnt cheeks, blue eyes, and fair hair inclined to curl. He looked rather like a spoilt boy who has been defrauded of his evening's entertainment.

"Do you seriously believe what you are telling me?" Mr. Cray demanded.

"Hang it all, man," was the irritable reply, "you don't suppose I should joke over such an infernal business! Until that dreary Christine hops it, my wife will be half asleep and as cold as an icicle. To-morrow she'll telephone to some of these spook lunatics, and they'll haunt the house then for days until Mina is herself again. I tell you I hate the whole infernal business."

Mr. Cray turned his cigar round and round in his fingers, sipped his whisky-and-soda, and pondered. Just inside the room, the kit-bag which they had brought from the Albert Hall had burst one of its fastenings, and a glitter of red, the same colour as the flaming costume of Mephistopheles, showed

itself. He opened his lips to ask a question, but decided to postpone it. Major Hartopp was not in the least the type of a Mephistopheles. His florid complexion, his ingenuous, if a little peevish, expression, stamped him as belonging to a different order of being altogether. Everything about him proclaimed the sports-loving young officer, who has done well enough in the Army to have attained his majority and stopped there.

"I can't make out why Mina seems to have attached herself to you so much this evening," her husband ruminated. "She came to see you several times, didn't she?"

"She came twice," Mr. Cray admitted. "She had some supper the first time."

"You aren't psychic or anything of that sort, are you?"

"Not that I know of," was the cautious reply.

"Says you saw her dancing with Satan—what?"

"I saw that all right," Mr. Cray admitted. "A weird-looking couple they made, too."

"Well, no one else did," her husband declared. "There wasn't a Satan there, as a matter of fact."

Mr. Cray's eyes rested upon the gaping kit-bag. He stroked his chin. His whole interest in the evening's adventure was reviving.

"That's so!" he murmured.

"Not a sign of one," the young man continued. "According to Mina, that proves you to be possessed of negative psychic attraction. I don't know what it means, old fellow, but you've got it. She declares that she was drawn to you as a trembling leaf blown by the wind."

Mr. Cray surreptitiously patted his breast pocket, where a slight protuberance indicated the continued presence of his somewhat bulky pocket-book.

"She did kinder stay round in a weird sort of fashion," he admitted. "I thought she was trying to play some joke upon me. I couldn't seem to tumble at what she was driving at, half the time."

"My wife's all right when she's herself," the young man declared, irritably. "It was this infernal Christine Seboa who was trying to rake you into the spook business. Between you and me, I hate the whole thing. Half of it's bunkum, and the other half's unwholesome. Just one more small whisky before you go?"

"Only a spot, then," Mr. Cray assented, holding out his glass. "Not quite so strong this time."

"It's pretty nearly pre-war," his host remarked, as he resumed his seat. "Good God!"

Both men glanced towards the door. The Spirit was standing there—a singular apparition. A white dressing-gown hung loosely down her back, she was still wearing her black mask. Her eyes were fixed upon Mr. Cray.

"You must come," she begged, speaking very softly yet with almost singular distinctness. "You must please come. They will not let me sleep. They call for you all the time."

"I am sorry," was the hasty response, "but I'm just off home. I should have gone before now but your husband's whisky was too good to leave."

Mr. Cray rose to his feet with determination. His host followed his example.

"Mina," the latter protested, "you really must not worry Mr. Cray now. You are quite mistaken in him. He's as much outside all this business as I am."

She shook her head. Her eyes still pleaded with Mr. Cray.

"If you are not happy you shall not stay," she said, "but you must come or they will give me no peace."

"I guess there's some mistake," Mr. Cray declared, coldly. "You'll have to excuse me."

Her distress became almost a paroxysm. She clutched the framework of the door with either hand, barring their egress. Hartopp drew his guest on one side.

"Look here, Mr. Cray," he begged, apologetically, "be a good chap and humour her for two minutes. Just put your head into her little sanctum. She calls it her temple. Maybe that'll satisfy her, and you needn't stay a minute."

"Has she got it into her head that there are spooks there waiting for me?" Mr. Cray queried.

"Of course it's all utter nonsense," the other rejoined, "but she'll never rest now unless you do it. I'll come along as far as the door, anyway."

Mr. Cray shrugged his shoulders, and the little procession, led by the Spirit, passed down the passage by the side of the staircase until they reached a door at the far end.

"Come," she whispered, opening it softly.

Mr. Cray stood by her side. There was no light and the darkness was impenetrable. It was also very cold, as though the windows were open. The only visible object was the Spirit standing by his side, a pillar of white, her eyes like points of fire.

"Say, what's doing here?" Mr. Cray asked, a little uneasily. "Do your visitors need to come in through the window? I guess——"

"Please be quiet," a low voice begged him. "Be silent for one moment. Listen."

Mr. Cray listened, and it seemed to him that he heard the door close behind him. He half turned around. The curtains were

shaking as though a sudden wind were blowing into the room. Then he felt fingers upon the pulses of his wrist, and immediately it seemed to him that they were beating as though they would break through his flesh; fingers upon his temples, and immediately the sense that sledge-hammers were beating there, beating against the nerves of his life. His whole sense of being had become pandemonium. The roaring of a furnace was in his ears. He felt himself sinking down and down into space, falling—lower and lower.

MR. CRAY opened his eyes. There were splashes of daylight in the sitting-room, which made the electric lights look feeble and dim. On the lounge opposite, Major Hartopp was still reclining, although he had changed his dress coat for a dressing-gown and removed his collar. He welcomed Mr. Cray's opening eyes with a little sigh of relief.

"Feeling the better for your nap?" he asked, glancing suggestively at the clock.

"My nap?" Mr. Cray repeated, vaguely.

His *vis-à-vis* nodded and stifled a yawn.

"You dropped off like a child," he said. "I don't want to seem inhospitable, but I think you had better wake up now. Your chauffeur has been in twice and he doesn't seem in the best of tempers."

Mr. Cray looked at the extinct cigar which had apparently slipped from his fingers and lay upon the hearthrug, brushed the cold ashes from his waistcoat, and rose to his feet.

"What happened to me in that room?" he demanded.

"Which room?" his host asked.

"The one at the end of the passage, where you and I and your wife went together."

Major Hartopp looked at his guest hard, then he smiled.

"You've been dreaming," he observed. "You haven't left that easy-chair since you arrived, and you certainly haven't seen anything of my wife. She went straight to bed directly we got home."

"Straight to bed?" Mr. Cray repeated, in a dazed tone. "You mean to tell me that she didn't come down here in a white dressing-gown and still wearing a mask, and talk about spooks who were clamouring for me in the room at the end of the passage?"

Major Hartopp stifled a yawn.

"She most certainly did not," he declared, a little testily. "You'll forgive my hurrying you, old chap, won't you?" he went on, leading the way towards the door. "To tell you the truth, I'm dying to get to bed. If I'd had any idea that you were dreaming things, I'd have woke you up."

"Dreaming!" Mr. Cray muttered.

"Sounds like some sort of nightmare," the other observed. "You seemed to be sleeping so peacefully, though, that I hated to disturb you."

Mr. Cray felt suddenly for his pocket-book. It was there in its accustomed place, just as bulky and capacious as ever. Neither had the kit-bag, with its incriminating gleam of scarlet, been removed.

"Not your bag, is it?" Major Hartopp asked, carelessly.

"I hadn't any grip at all," Mr. Cray answered. "Isn't it yours?"

Major Hartopp shook his head.

"Mine was practically empty. All I took in it was a couple of bottles of champagne. I set it down on the steps of the Albert Hall while we were waiting, and must have picked up this one by mistake. I'll send it back presently. Jove, isn't the air good!" he added, as he opened the front door and let in a little of the cool morning breeze. "So long! Look us up some day. You'll find us in the telephone book."

"Sure!" Mr. Cray promised. "Sorry to have kept you up," he added, mechanically.

MR. CRAY sat back in the corner of the car, no longer in the least sleepy, and probably the most puzzled man in London. He had no headache nor any other sign of ill-being such as might reasonably have been expected to remain with a man who had been drugged or otherwise maltreated. The roll of notes remained in his pocket-book untouched. He knew better than anyone else could that he was and had been all the time perfectly sober. What explanation was there for the strange experience through which he had passed? Mentally he tabulated the various questions as they had occurred to him.

1. Was Mrs. Hartopp simply a foolish and hysterical woman who had imposed even upon her husband, and who had attached herself to him out of caprice?

2. Was she really a medium and in direct communication with the world of spiritland, in which up till now he had had no faith?

3. Was she a clever adventuress with fraudulent designs upon him? Against that, his pocket-book and jewellery were still untouched.

4. What was the position of Major Hartopp?

5. Had he really slept in his easy-chair and only dreamed of that brief period of unconsciousness?

There was something in the early morning atmosphere which encouraged common sense. One by one Mr. Cray discarded the suspicions which had grown up in his mind. By the time he had reached his rooms at the Milan Court he had almost forgotten them. With a pleasant sense of anticipatory luxury, he undressed and plunged into a steaming

bath, lying there for a few minutes with half-closed eyes before stretching out his hand lazily for the sponge and soap. Suddenly he sat bolt upright, gazing at the first finger of his right hand. At exactly the spot where he was in the habit of grasping his fountain pen was a deep smudge of ink. He stared at it in blank and complete amazement, with a host of new ideas rushing into his brain. For of one thing Mr. Cray was absolutely and completely certain—there had been no such blemish upon his finger when he had left his box at the Albert Hall.

Precisely two minutes after the front doors of the South Audley Street branch of a well-known bank had been opened, Major Hartopp descended from a taxi, and, after some fumbling in his pocket, produced a cheque which he handed across the counter. The manager glanced at it, turned to another customer a few feet away, who was apparently adding up a list of credits, and, leaving the cheque upon the counter, moved a couple of yards to a position from which he could command a view of a small private office. He made some undistinguishable sign, and a moment later Mr. Cray strolled in. Major Hartopp greeted him affably.

"Both men glanced towards the door. The Spirit was standing there—a singular apparition. 'You must come,' she begged. 'You must please come.'"

"Morning, Mr. Cray! Up and about early, what?"

"I might say the same of you," Mr. Cray remarked, pointedly.

"This gentleman has just presented a cheque for a thousand pounds, drawn by you," the manager announced. "May I ask if it is in order?"

"It most surely is not," was the forcible reply.

The customer who was counting the credits, and who bore a strong resemblance to the monk of the night before, moved a little back from the counter, standing between Major Hartopp and the door. That gentleman, however, seemed in no wise embarrassed.

"Cheque for a thousand fiddlesticks!" he scoffed. "Look at it again, my dear sir."

The manager glanced at the cheque, frowned in a puzzled manner, and stood for a few seconds with his mouth open, with the air of one stricken dumb with astonishment.

"Have a look at it yourself, Mr. Cray," Major Hartopp continued. "It's a silly business, I admit, but my wife got the idea last night that you were a strong unbeliever. As you know, I'm a bit that way myself, but if that's really your signature, this Christine Seboa is a dangerous sort of a spook."

The three men gazed together at the cheque. It was clearly enough a cheque for one sovereign, made out to Christine Seboa or bearer.

"It can't be my writing," Mr. Cray declared, "because I never remember writing it, but it's the most wonderful imitation I ever saw. Come to think of it, too," he went on, in a puzzled manner, "the only thing that brought me here was some ink on my fingers."

"Oh, you wrote the cheque all right," Major Hartopp affirmed. "It's a trick of one of her spooks. My instructions were to cash this and to ask you to dinner."

The manager for the first time recovered his power of speech. "The most amazing part of the whole matter is," he declared, "that I could have sworn this gentleman presented a cheque for a thousand pounds."

Major Hartopp smiled.

"I should scarcely have entered into a joke of that sort," he observed. "What about that pound? You signed the cheque all right."

Mr. Cray nodded. His eyes were still fixed upon his indubitable signature. At a sign from him, the manager passed a pound note across the counter, which Major Hartopp folded and passed into his coat pocket.

'Dine with us at the Carlton to-night at eight o'clock, Mr. Cray," he invited, "and I promise you shall have your pound back with interest!"

"I shall be delighted," Mr. Cray murmured.

"See you later, then," the young officer concluded, nodding to the manager and taking his leisurely departure. "Good morning."

Major Hartopp left the bank and they heard his taxi drive away. The manager stood on one side of the counter and Mr. Cray on the other. The inspector strolled up to them. They all examined the cheque for a sovereign.

"This gets me," Mr. Cray confessed. "If that isn't my signature, I'll eat the cheque."

"And if the cheque he showed me three minutes ago wasn't for a thousand pounds, I'll eat it too," the manager declared.

The inspector was called into the inner office to answer the telephone. He was out again in thirty seconds.

"We're spoofed somehow!" he exclaimed. "Major and Mrs. Hartopp are on the Continent. Their house in Chelsea has been taken furnished for a month by a man and woman wanted very badly by the American police. The man is a great sleight-of-hand thief and one of the most dangerous adventurers in America. The woman has robbed them in New York of over fifty thousand pounds on this spook stunt."

The manager suddenly stooped down, picked up a strip of paper from underneath the counter, and held it out.

"A cheque for a thousand pounds!" he exclaimed. "I knew it!"

"Simple as A B C!" the inspector exclaimed. "Our man saw at once there was something wrong. He'd got the other cheque ready, changed it, and slipped the thousand-pound one through the hole in the counter there for pass-books. I'll lay odds, too, he's the man who got away with ten thousand pounds' worth of jewels last night in the costume of a scarlet Mephistopheles."

"I saw him with it," Mr. Cray groaned.

"Where were the cheques?" the inspector asked.

Mr. Cray produced his pocket-book.

"I always have two or three loose ones with me," he explained, "although I'd this roll of notes, as it happened, last night."

The inspector glanced at the notes and turned towards the door.

"I'm off," he exclaimed. "Lost too much time already. Ask Mr. Thomson there to look at your notes."

Mr. Cray produced them. The manager held one up to the light.

"Faked," he exclaimed. "They changed your notes, Mr. Cray, and took out your cheques, but what I can't understand is—how did they ever get you to sign them?"

"I'm worrying some about that myself," Mr. Cray confided.

(Another of Mr. Cray's Adventures will appear next month.)

A NEW STORY OF "QUINNEY'S."

The Barbens of Barben-Lacy

by

HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL

Illustrated by JOHN CAMPBELL

I.

JOE QUINNEY was in a bad temper.

Everybody in the Soho Square establishment, including Susan, his wife, was aware of this. Two things had happened to upset him. He had been outbid at Christie's by a rival dealer for the possession of a magnificent figure of the goddess of Mercy, Kuan-Yin, which he greatly coveted. And then, returning to his sanctuary and heartening himself up—as was his wont—by caressing gently a beautiful *famille noire* bowl, the beloved object had slipped, somehow, through his fingers and shattered itself upon the parquet floor. Once before, when he was a boy, such a disaster had happened, and—to impress the accident upon a plastic memory—his father had dusted the boy's jacket handsomely with a rattan cane. Young Joe, like Poe's Raven, had muttered to himself: "Never more!"

He picked up the bits of the bowl and put them away in a drawer. Everything is possible to the cunning restorer of broken porcelain, as the Portland Vase bears witness, but Joe Quinney knew well enough that a thing of surpassing beauty would degenerate, after treatment, into what he detested—a cripple! He couldn't caress cripples in porcelain.

Alone in his sanctuary he meditated mournfully upon the loss of the goddess of Mercy and the *famille noire* bowl. Susan, he was aware, would not sympathize with him wholeheartedly. For twenty years she had been jealous of the loving attention paid to the bowl. Once or twice she had secretly contemplated its destruction.

Ravaged by his emotions, Quinney remained alone in his sanctuary undisturbed by the staff. But, presently, his features relaxed as he bent over a small show-case which held some miniatures. For many years Quinney had refused to buy miniatures, for the sufficing reason that he knew little about them. But sooner or later anything of real beauty was bound to appeal to him, and gradually expert knowledge had come to him. Now, he confessed to Susan that he preferred them to pictures.

He was gloating over a Petitot, when an assistant presented himself.

"A lady to see you, sir."

"What about?" growled Quinney.

"She asked to see you, sir."

"I dessay," replied Joe, who relapsed into the Doric of his youth when he was not at his best; "but, by Gum, you know well enough, my lad, that I don't see ladies just because they ask to see me. Time is money in these days. You hop it!"

The assistant moved to the door and paused.

"She's a nice lady in mourning, sir."

Quinney's attention was challenged.

"In mourning—ho? So am I. Well, I'll see her, although I don't suppose you know the difference between a buyer and a 'rather nicer.'"

"Rather nicers" was a term of contempt stigmatizing ladies who pottered about saleRooms applying substantive and adverb to "gems" which they had no intention of purchasing.

"She don't look a 'rather nicer,'" said the assistant.

"I'll see the lady here."

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The lady was ushered into the sanctuary. Quinney had to admit that her appearance was prepossessing. He could acclaim quality even when his liver was out of order. The stranger bore herself with distinction; her voice had alluring inflections; her hands and feet were delicately fashioned.

"What can I do for you, madam?"

"You are Mr. Quinney, aren't you?"

"I'm Joe Quinney right enough."

"I am Mrs. Barben, of Barben-Lacy, near Symington. Are you coming to our sale, Mr. Quinney?"

Quinney shook his head.

"I haven't heard of your sale, madam."

SHE took from her bag a catalogue, and handed it to him in silence. Quinney glanced at the title page, gleaning instantly the information that an early Tudor house, and what it held, was to be offered for sale at an early date.

"I ought to have had one o' these," he murmured.

He stared at the visitor, slightly raising his brows. His eyes became alert.

"I'm surprised you didn't."

"Well, madam, I ain't."

"Indeed?"

Quinney rapped the catalogue with impatient fingers as he said, tartly:—

"The agents you have employed, madam, don't send catalogues to me and men like me."

The lady smiled faintly.

"Are there many men like you, Mr. Quinney?"

"Mighty few," replied Quinney, with energy. "If you will kindly take a chair, madam, I should like to have a squint at this catalogue."

The lady sighed.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Quinney, that so famous a dealer will find little to interest him."

"Then why have you come here?" he asked, bluntly.

But the words were void of offence, and he had offered her the best chair in the room. She sat down and answered his question with entire frankness.

"There are a few good pieces and some miniatures. I brought one miniature with me, but I know nothing about it."

She took from her bag a miniature and handed it to him.

"Ozias Humphrey!" he exclaimed, sharply.

"Oh, no, Mr. Quinney. That is John Barben, the great-grandfather of my husband."

"I mean, madam, that Ozias Humphrey painted it."

"Did he? I've never heard of him."

Quinney looked cross. Unconsciously this charming woman had touched a sore spot. It irritated him to find persons in possession of beautiful objects and knowing nothing whatever about them.

"But you ought to know," he snapped at her.

She shrugged a pair of slender shoulders.

"We are interested in our miniatures," she said, quietly, "because they are our own people." Then she continued, hurriedly: "My husband's father, Colonel Barben, and his father before him, sold the more valuable pictures and furniture, and most of the land. The old house is left. Now that must go."

Quinney's eyes softened. He said in a milder tone:—

"You brought this miniature to me thinking, perhaps, that I would offer you a fair price for it?"

"Oh, no. Our agents asked us to put everything into the sale. They pointed out, quite reasonably, so we thought, that the very few good things left to us would attract the dealers."

"Um!" said Quinney, grimly. "I quite understand, madam."

"But now—I don't."

"That is very sharp of you."

She laughed lightly.

"We have our intuitions, Mr. Quinney. Somehow, I can't explain why, you have made me suspicious; not of you," she hastened to add.

Quinney said nothing for a minute or two. He glanced at the catalogue, turning over the pages with nervous fingers.

"There isn't much," he said, pensively; "and the little there is don't tell much. Look at this item: 'A small collection of family miniatures.' That might mean anything or nothing to a London dealer. But I'm sure o' this, Mrs. Barben, the man who made out this catalogue knows an Ozias Humphrey miniature when he sees it."

"You mean——?"

"I mean, ma'am, that you're up against a knock-out."

"A knock-out?"

Quinney explained volubly.

"There's a queer sort of honour among thieves, but I ain't a thief. Mind you, I buy my stuff as cheap as I can. It ain't my business to tell sellers in the open market what their stuff is worth. The sellers ought to know values, but most of 'em don't. If they did, half the dealers in our business would put up their shutters. You ought to know that this miniature is worth forty pounds and the name of the man who painted it, but you don't. At your sale it may bring a couple o' pound, but at the 'knock-out' afterwards the dealers will bid it up amongst 'emselves—see?"

"Not yet."

"Quinney s eyes softened. He said in a milder tone: 'You brought this miniature to me thinking, perhaps, that I would offer you a fair price for it?'"

Quinney chuckled as he made his meaning clear. Dealers of the less reputable sort did not bid against each other at public sales for the possession of valuable objects. In a cosy room at some neighbouring tavern the precious objects cheaply bought in by the fraternity were "put up" for a second time. Quinney concluded on a personal note :—

"I've attended knock-outs, madam, and I've been knocked out. I don't do business that way now, and that is why I wasn't sent this catalogue."

His visitor gasped.

"I should like to look over what is in your house, Mrs. Barben, and I should like to do it on the quiet."

"I return to Barben-Lacy this afternoon, Mr. Quinney. You have only to name a day convenient to you."

He named the morrow, and Mrs. Barben smiled, thanked him, and went her way.

II.

AFTER reaching Westhampton, Quinney engaged a motor. The man who drove the car supposed that his fare was afraid of catching cold, because he sat muffled up to the eyes as he sped through the ancient town of Symington. Quinney removed his muffler as soon as he reached Barben-Lacy.

It was a delightfully attractive old manor house standing upon high ground, with the Solent in front of it and the Forest of Ys behind it. Between the house and the sea stretched water-meadows and marshes with an estuary winding through them. Some excellent farming land lay high above the water meadows. It struck Quinney immediately that here was a compact domain not likely to tax too heavily the resources of the owner. The house was not too big, and the garden encircling it of modest dimensions. A family, so he decided, might live quietly in such a place for many centuries. He felt unhappy at the thought of Barben-Lacy being sold.

A parlourmaid opened the front door, and she looked as if she might combine in a stout personality the more arduous duties of a housemaid. Quinney perceived that the old house was in sad need of restoration within and without.

Mrs. Barben received him in an oak-panelled parlour full of furniture of different periods, most of it worthless in the eye of a collector.

"The Barbens have been here," said the châtelaine, "for five hundred years."

"May I see the miniatures first, ma'am ?"

A modest collection was submitted to critical eyes. Quinney perceived a Samuel Cooper, some Cosways, several Englehearts, a Plimer, and three enamels by Zincke. All were in admirable condition.

"We keep them in a drawer, Mr. Quinney."

"It's a wicked shame to expose miniatures to the light," observed Quinney. Then he added, curtly: "What you have here, ma'am, is worth about five hundred pound to a dealer. At Christie's—if the right people were bidding—they might fetch more. They would be worth in the neighbourhood of what I say to me."

"I had no idea they were so valuable."

"Now, ma'am, I'll step through the house. We might take a look at the pictures first."

They did so. Quinney learned that every picture of value had been sold long ago. And the eighteenth-century furniture, together with some earlier bits, had vanished likewise. Here and there he discovered a chair and a bureau which had been overlooked. But, practically speaking, with the exception of the miniatures, there was hardly anything in the old house to lure a famous dealer from London to Symington.

Mrs. Barben insisted charmingly that he should lunch with her and her husband.

Major Barben came in. Quinney liked him at sight, and liking warmed into sympathetic interest within half an hour. The Major had survived the retreat from Mons and four years in France. It struck Quinney that the young man—he looked about twenty-eight—was singularly frank and outspoken about his affairs. Colonel Barben had just died. The small estate was encumbered by a mortgage.

"We have to sell, Mr. Quinney, and that's all there is about it."

"Seems a shame," said Quinney. "After five hundred years, by Gum!"

The Major nodded, adding, curtly: "The portrait of the Barben who was the curse of the family hangs opposite to you. I sit with my back to him on principle."

Quinney stared at an ancient canvas badly stretched and dark with the dirt of centuries. Major Barben went on, acrimoniously :—

"We had a great man in our family, Sir David Barben, who was in high favour with Henry VIII. But he left everything he could away from his grandson and heir, Richard Barben, because he knew him to be a wrong 'un. Oddly enough, this spendthrift and gambler became a bit of a pincher after he succeeded, but his bad qualities popped out again in his descendants. My great-grandfather spent everything he could lay his hands on. And he was a smuggler."

"Smuggler ?" repeated Quinney.

"I'll show you something presently which will interest you."

"And so will I," murmured Mrs. Barben.

"Are you a father, Mr. Quinney ?" asked the Major.

" One daughter," said Quinney.

" Ah ! My wife wants to show you a son."

Quinney was more and more pleased with this agreeable couple, but it remained plain to him that the approaching sale of their ancient house affected them grievously. The two men were left together in the dining-room to drink coffee and smoke a cigar.

" The boy will be brought in," said Major Barben.

He was.

Quinney pronounced him emphatically to be a fine fat baby boy, old enough to grip tightly an extended forefinger.

" He holds on to it," said Quinney. " I should have liked to have a little son, but," he added, solemnly, " the birth o' my daughter nearly did me in. What I suffered with my first an' last tongue can't tell, leastways not mine."

Mrs. Barben laughed and carried out the baby.

In a few more minutes Quinney—always avid for information—gathered some interesting details. The house had to go, but the Major would remain upon a small farm, all that was left of a big property, and fortunately unencumbered.

" What would it take to save the house ? " asked Quinney.

The Major looked slightly astonished, but Quinney's honest face disarmed him.

" Five thousand," he answered, curtly. Having no appetite, probably, for indiscreet questions, the young man rose from the table and led the way into a sitting-room. Quinney noticed at once the immense thickness of the walls.

" This is the oldest part of the house," explained his host. " Examine that alcove, please."

Quinney did so, noticing that it was framed. The frame interested him immediately.

" That's a rare old frame," he remarked.

Within the frame was the alcove lined with a dusky red rep. Upon some shelves stood some porcelain of no particular value.

" Under that rep," said Major Barben, " is a door leading to a cellar. In that cellar was kept the smuggled brandy, and many a haunch of the King's venison. My grandfather affirmed that the frame held a picture, which, of course, concealed the alcove."

As he spoke he touched a hidden spring and the frame swung back.

" Very dodgy," observed Quinney.

" The picture that was in the frame must have been sold long ago."

" I wonder," said Quinney, thoughtfully. After a pause he added, tentatively : " That picture in the dining-room of—of the ' wrong 'un '—would just about fit that frame."

" You are mistaken. It's larger."

Quinney stared at an open fireplace.

" Does that chimney smoke ? " he asked.

Barben laughed.

" It did—horribly, till my father found some patent chimney-pot. But why do you ask ? "

" The picture in the dining-room is black with smoke. I know enough to be sure of that."

" You may be right, Mr. Quinney."

Quinney produced a foot rule.

" For the fun of the thing I'd like to measure that frame."

" Certainly."

Quinney did so. Together the men returned to the dining-room. Triumphantly, Quinney demonstrated that he was right. The picture might have gone into the frame round the alcove. He examined it with quickened interest and attention.

" It's a bad portrait," said Barben. But Quinney remained silent, staring not at the face of the " wrong 'un," but at the broad chest beneath it.

" It *is* bad and it isn't," he said at last.

" What can you mean ? "

" I wish I had some Castille soap and a small sponge."

" We are still able to supply that. But——"

" The face is dud work," said Quinney, " and one can't see much else, but the hands are a bit of all right."

" You have sharp eyes to see them. Are you serious ? Shall I get some soft soap and hot water ? "

" Lu' warm, please," amended Quinney.

" You shall have both in a jiffy."

MAJOR BARBEN left the room. Quinney mounted a chair. He peered long and hard, not at the hands, but at what appeared to be the collar of some Order and the ruff above it. Then he whistled softly, and descended from the chair.

Barben came back. Quinney made a lather, dipped a small sponge into it, and ascended the chair.

" By Jove ! " exclaimed the Major.

After ten minutes of gentle rubbing, part of the collar was revealed.

" No duffer painted that," said Quinney.

" What conclusion do you come to ? " asked Barben.

" None as yet, Major. It's fairly obvious, though, that one man painted the face and another the collar."

" Yes, it is."

" I'd like to carry that picture back to London with me, and take some of the dirt off it."

The young man hesitated and flushed slightly.

"I—I can't afford to spend money on cleaning inferior pictures."

"But that will be my affair. I can slip the picture out of its frame, remove the stretcher, and roll it up."

Major Barben nodded, impressed by Quinney's manner.

"It won't fetch less at the sale after I've been at it," he went on. "And I may bid for it myself. I shall bid for the miniatures, unless you care to dispose of them by private treaty."

"I'm afraid now I couldn't do that. I can sell the house and everything in it before the sale, but we have no nibbles even. People aren't buying houses without modern improvements, and out of repair."

"I suppose not," said Quinney. "Well — what about this picture?"

"You can do what you like with the old scoundrel. I shall be glad to be rid of him, but he must appear at the sale."

"He'll be there all right," said Quinney, cheerfully.

"'Let him go into the sale as he is,' said the Major, testily.

III.

QUINNEY returned to London and his wife. But of the picture he said not a word to the faithful Susan. He mentioned casually the miniatures.

"A nice little lot, Susie. And I'll see to it that they're bid up, my girl. A less honest man than your Joe might ha' got 'em cheap."

Susan tossed her head.

"When you go on about your honesty, Joe, I get scared. I do indeed."

Quinney grunted and grinned.

Next morning he went to work upon the dingy canvas. And he whistled as he worked. When the collar was plainly revealed, he chuckled.

"I've seen you before," he muttered.

He locked up the canvas and betook himself to the National Gallery, where he spent a profitable half hour. Thence he hurried, still whistling, to the British Museum. Quinney boasted, not without reason, that he knew where to find expert

authority upon any subject or object connected with his beguiling profession. He went straight up to the reading-room.

Within ten minutes the knowledge he sought had become his. There had been a David Barben high in favour with Henry VIII., a notable personage. English history, however, made mention of no other Barbens. Sir David Barben had been Knight of his Shire and a Privy Councillor. Full particulars concerning him were dug out of a county history.

"Why," said Quinney to himself, "is the 'wrong 'un' wearing an Order that belonged to the right 'un?"

'Dear! Dear!' said Quinney. 'In his frame he'll fetch an extra fiver.'"

Vanity, of course, might account for this, but vanity failed to account for the fact that the bejewelled collar had been painted by a master hand.

Before night the riddle was solved. Under the scowling face of the "wrong 'un" lay another face. Quinney removed enough paint from the hair to reveal hair of a different colour beneath. We present the conjecture of a shrewd man for what it may be worth. The "wrong 'un" had hated the great man of the family, who had refused to leave a hard-earned fortune to a wastrel. The mere sight of a noble face, calmly benignant, must have exasperated the ne'er-do-well unendurably. Quinney came to the inevitable conclusion that Richard Barben had instructed some local painter to cover the face of David Barben with that of his grandson.

To remove one surface of paint from another surface beneath it is a long and delicate process, but not beyond the powers of a dealer as experienced in such matters as Joe Quinney. However, he did not attempt the task. Instead, he covered up with dirt the tiny bit of reddish hair which he had exposed.

Upon the morrow he went back to the

British Museum and spent some time in the print-room. His patience and acuteness were rewarded. He found a wood engraving of Sir David Barben, Knight, after a picture by Hans Holbein, and the hands of Sir David were unmistakably the hands in the portrait. Sir David wore the same jewelled collar!

After this enlightening experience Quinney passed a restless night. The tremendous discovery was his alone. An authentic portrait by Holbein might fetch anything between five and ten thousand pounds, particularly in America. It would be easy to sell such a picture to half-a-dozen men of his acquaintance.

He had two unsophisticated people to deal with. Already they were under obligations to him because he had placed a fair value on the miniatures. He could return the portrait of Richard Barben, much improved by cleaning. He could attend the sale, buy the miniatures and the family pictures, which were not even specified in the catalogue. The pictures would go for less than a hundred pounds. More, as a sop to his conscience, he would bid up the other good bits, and take a malicious pleasure in doing so, all to the advantage of Major and Mrs. Barben.

It must be remembered that he had suffered grievously in his salad days at the hands of other dealers. He had been "had" to the tune of many hundreds of pounds. Now—he would get a bit of his own back.

He fell asleep, to awake unrefreshed and unrepentant.

Early matutinal inspection of the portrait fortified the conviction that nobody—apart from the few experts who were not likely to attend a small country sale—would suspect the truth. He had not removed all the smoke and engrained dirt from the canvas. It still looked what it appeared to be superficially—a bad portrait of a singularly unprepossessing man.

"It's a sitter," thought Quinney, as he sat opposite to his Susan at breakfast.

"You didn't sleep well, Joe."

"No, I didn't. And what of it?"

"Nothing, dear, but it reminded me of that awful time when Mr. Hunsaker bought the chairs which weren't Chippendale. You talked in your sleep then; yes, you did."

"Ho! Talked in my sleep last night, did I?"

"You were tossing about and muttering."

"Maybe, Susie, I was dreaming of them as downed me to-rights when we first came to London town."

He finished his bacon in frowning silence and returned to the portrait. The uneasy Susan followed him, and discovered her masterful lord staring moodily at it.

"Heavens! What a face!" she exclaimed.

"He was a wrong 'un, if you want to know," admitted Quinney.

"And it's written on his face, Joe. It always does come out, don't it?"

"What comes out?"

"Wickedness, to be sure."

"Um!" grunted Quinney.

Susan went back to her household duties. Quinney rolled up the canvas. The sale was advertised to take place in a week's time. He made up his mind to carry the portrait to Barben-Lacy, stretch it, place it in its frame, and look carefully over the miniatures and the other good bits.

"I'll let those Symington dealers have a squint at me," he thought, "and then the dirty dogs will know what they're up against."

Engrossed by these thoughts he caught sight of himself in a Chippendale mirror.

"Gosh!" he muttered. "It does come out, don't it?"

IV.

HE was received at Barben-Lacy as an honoured guest. Nevertheless, when he unrolled the portrait of Richard Barben, the Major exhibited annoyance rather than gratitude.

"The fellow looks a regular devil," he said, shortly.

"Yes," said Mrs. Barben, "I really shouldn't like baby to look at him."

Quinney, in reply, demanded a hammer and some tacks.

"Let him go into the sale as he is," said the Major, testily.

"Dear, dear!" said Quinney. "In his frame he'll fetch an extra fiver."

"Nobody will buy him," affirmed Mrs. Barben. Then, unable to interpret the odd expression upon Quinney's face, she said, quickly: "Do you like it?"

"It's better than I thought it was," admitted Quinney.

Wife looked at husband.

"If you like it," said Major Barben, "will you accept it from us? There is nothing to prevent our giving away an ugly picture, and we are deeply grateful to you for telling us about the miniatures."

"You are very kind," said Quinney, in a hoarse voice. He was telling himself that the thing had become too easy. He could tuck the portrait under his arm and return to London. Then he heard himself saying in an odd voice:—

"I do value that picture."

"It's a singularly evil face," said Major Barben. "Since you have cleaned it I seem to see in it a curious malevolence, as if he foresaw the activities of my smuggling forbears. It's odd that he should have hung in

that frame to hide the opening of the alcove. He was a robber of the poor and helpless."

"Was he?" murmured Quinney.

"And that, surely, is utterly despicable. Your bold buccaneer appeals to me. The men who sailed the Spanish Main earned their loot, but this wretched ancestor of mine oppressed his innocent tenantry. Away with him! He's yours, Mr. Quinney. We are delighted to be quit of him."

Quinney nodded his head. After a pause he said, slowly:—

"Look at the face, and then at the hands."

The Major did so.

"It's difficult to believe that such hands belonged to that face, Mr. Quinney. But you said they were painted by somebody else."

"Yes, I did and do."

"But how do you really know?"

"Well, for one thing, now that the picture is cleaner, we can see the brush-work. I should have said that the man who painted those hands and that collar was left-handed."

"You are an expert."

Mrs. Barben said, playfully:—

"Don't you think we might look at somebody else? If you will come into the garden, Mr. Quinney, I'll show you our boy. He would like to squeeze your finger again."

Quinney followed the mother and father of "Boy" on to the lawn. Below them, not a mile away, lay the Solent.

"The smugglers," said Barben, "crept up that estuary. The wild-fowlers, who are still my tenants, will practise the old trade again if they get the chance."

But Quinney was looking at the baby.

"It sort o' worries me," he said, abruptly, "to think that such a fine boy won't be a Barben of Barben-Lacy."

Mrs. Barben turned her graceful head aside. Quinney heard a stifled sob as the Major said, frozenly:—

"You will excuse me, Mr. Quinney, from discussing that."

"No, I won't!" exclaimed Quinney.

"I beg your pardon?"

"It's got to be discussed here and now. I want that picture, Major, but you can't afford to give it to me, because of this boy."

Husband and wife admitted afterwards that they thought their visitor was mad. For the moment they dissembled.

"Can't afford to give it to you?"

"No. Suppose I offered you five thousand for it?"

"Five thousand—what?"

"Pounds!" shouted Quinney. His eyes were sparkling furiously, and his queer face was twitching with excitement. Before the astonished Barbens could utter a syllable he went on:—

"But you mustn't take my offer. This is an authentic Holbein. He painted with his left hand! It may fetch double as much at Christie's. I'll attend to that for you."

And then he explained everything.

THE portrait of Sir David Barben, Knight, hangs to-day in the gallery of a New York multi-millionaire. The Barbens are still at Barben-Lacy.

SOME ADVENTURES OF

THE FOUR JUST MEN.

By EDGAR WALLACE.

A new series of mystery stories starting next month.

RESULT OF "MISTAKES" COMPETITION IN MAY NUMBER.

My Life of Song

by

TETRAZZINI

Illustrated by E. G. OAKDALE

I.

Madame Tetrazzini, the greatest living soprano, relates in these articles the fascinating story of her amazing career. The great *prima donna* has had innumerable adventures in all parts of the globe; wherever she has gone she has been publicly fêted and lionized as one of those divine songstresses who appear but once in a century. She tells of meetings with Royal and other important personages; how her earnings by her wonderful voice have reached the amazing total of over one million pounds; her first sensational bow to London, to New York, and other great cities; entertaining stories of her battles with impresarios and theatre managers; the friendships she has made and the enmities and jealousies that have been aroused by her astonishing successes; and how the great Patti came to hear if the Press were right in speaking of her as the "New Patti," and how the kind-hearted Queen of Song afterwards told her that she, Tetrazzini, was her legitimate successor.

THE first name that I heard to remember was the magic name of Patti. Shall I ever forget the first time I heard it and the strange thrill which ran through my young being as the full purport of it was made plain to my eager, childish mind?

It was at our house in Florence. The family were all in the sitting-room. My mother, busy and gentle as always, was sitting on one side of the fire, sewing; opposite to her was my father, comfortably reclining in his easy chair. Between them, rolled into a fluffy ball on the rug, was our tortoiseshell cat, quietly purring. The piano, an instrument which, through too frequent use, was often getting out of tune, but was nevertheless an excellent friend to us all, stood in the far corner. My sister Eva, nine years older than myself, was playing something from one of the operas. I, the baby, and, I have been told, a general favourite, could not have been more than four or five years old at the time. But I remember toddling over to the piano and saying, "Let baby sing."

"Yes," said my mother, looking up from her sewing. "Play for baby."

My sister played slowly and I sang the notes. The words I did not know. Nor do I remember the air. The notes came to me very readily as we went through the piece. When the air was finished I asked my sister to play it over once more, and she did. I remember that my mother and my other sister, Elvera, four years older than I, exclaimed, "Bravo! bravo!" as I finished singing. But my father! He called me over to him, took me on his knee, and lovingly caressed my plump young face. "Baby, I believe that you'll be a Patti some day," he said.

"What's Patti?" I asked, looking mystified.

Then he told me, in baby language, all about the great Patti.

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As he spoke my eyes must have opened very wide, as children's eyes do when they hear a wonderful story.

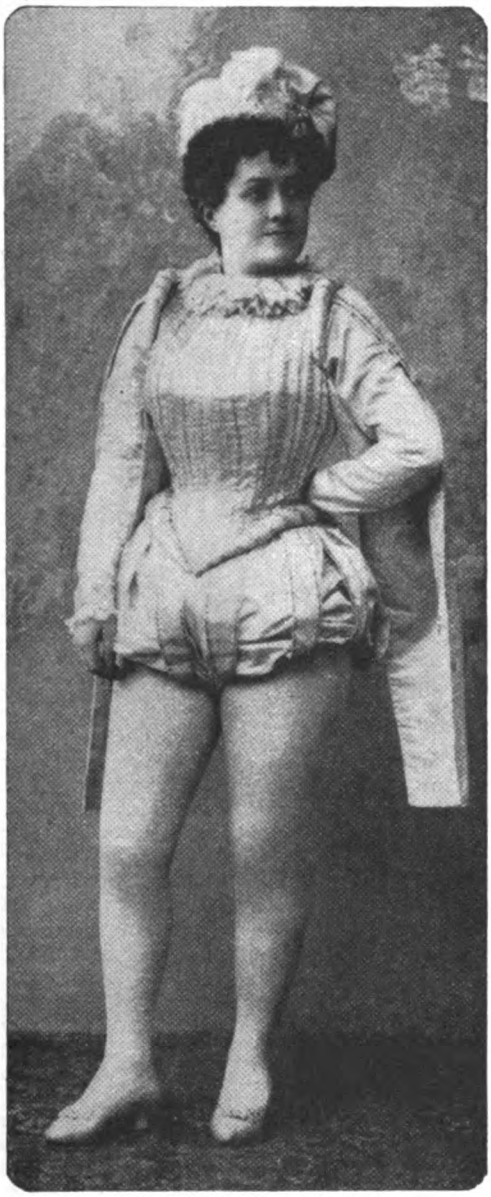
"Den me try to be a Patti, daddy," I exclaimed, using a phrase similar to this, if not actually the words. My father hugged me close to his broad chest and, still caressing my hair, again declared his firm belief that one day I should be as famous as his ideal.

Like so many other Italian households, ours was a musical home in the fullest sense. My mother had a sweet voice which, whether she was speaking or singing, always delighted my extremely sensitive ear. But she had never sung in public or undergone a training. She knew all the old Italian lullabies, and used to sing me to sleep with them when I was an infant. My father had a good ear but no voice.

"MY EARLY DAYS WERE VERY HAPPY TIMES."

I can say truthfully that my early days were very happy times. I do not look back, as some international *prime donne* have done, to a home of poverty and early struggles to keep the hungry wolf from the door. My father used to supply to the Italian Government the uniforms for the army officers, and so earned a comfortable living for our family. Having a good head for figures, I used to help him with his books, for which he used to allow me a tiny sum—about sixpence—weekly as pin-money.

I have no harrowing tale to tell of my musical studies, as have some of the great singers and players. There was never a time in my life when the work of preparation seemed so hard that I felt like abandoning the effort. I did not spend long hours practising scales and voice production. My *maestri* called me their easiest pupil. "You do not need a *maestro* at all," said one to me when I was at the Conservatoire of Music in my native Florence. "Your voice was born just right."



Tetrazzini in "L'Africana," the opera in which she made her *début*.

Certain it is that my actual training was probably the shortest of any *prima donna* that the world has produced. My sister Eva had to go through four years' hard study and incessant practice at the Conservatoire before being appointed to the chief position in the Royal Opera House at Madrid. What it took my sister four laborious years to accomplish I did in a year without effort. I do not write this in a spirit of boasting; on the contrary, to show that my success seemed to have been mapped out for me by nature. I took to music as a bird takes to air. It was my natural element.

When I first aspired to a life of song my mother pointed to the trying experiences of my sister Eva before she became successful. "The life of the songstress is a hard life," said my mother. "It means so much effort, so much self-sacrifice, so many disappointments, so many tears. Granted a good voice, the difficulty of obtaining a *début*, of convincing impresarios of your worth, and the moral temptations are almost insurmountable prior to 'arrival.' When you become a good singer you are always living

in fear of something affecting your voice. The rewards are not worth the toil and effort."

If my mother could only then have looked into the future and seen the truth! If she could have foreseen that in less than thirty years I should be able to earn with my voice no less than the stupendous sum of one million pounds! But she did not. Nor did I.

"Stay and help your father in his business," my mother counselled, "and become a merchant's wife." I often wonder what would have happened if I had done so. I suppose I should still be living in a little villa in Florence and be spending my days singing to the birds and listening to the stories told by my successful sister of her visits to the other countries of the world. My eyes would sparkle as she spoke of London and its opera difficulties, of New York, all sky-scrapers and hustle, and of dear old sleepy Madrid.

When my sister practised at home under her *maestro* I would steal into the room and listen to the music. I still remember her trials with "Gioconda," and how I had learned it by heart without any special instruction by the time she was ready to sing it from the operatic stage.

When the *maestro* took me to the Conservatoire he introduced me as the new musical prodigy. New students were required to take some little easy piece of music and to sing it to the Principal. If the singer gave any indication of promise she was admitted. If not, she was turned away. When my *maestro* took me first to the Conservatoire he told me to bring the aria from the prison scene in "Mefistofele" sung by Margherita. The piece is very difficult, as everyone knows, and I was then only about ten years old. Students are not usually taken at this Conservatoire until they are fifteen years old. But my *maestro* thought, though I was so young, it was wise to introduce me to the musical atmosphere of the college as early as possible, and he asked for an exception to be made to the rule in my case.

Compared with the other pupils I was then a very small, slim figure. The Principal looked from my *maestro* to myself in astonishment as I entered his room.

"What have you here?" he queried.

"This is little Tetrazzini, my musical prodigy."

"But she is only an infant."

"Her voice is grown-up, as you shall hear,"

"Then let me hear her sing."

I produced my excerpt from "Mefistofele," and the Principal raised his eyebrows.

"But she is not going to sing this?"

My *maestro* said: "Oh, yes, she is."

"But no one sings pieces like this to get admission. They do that when they go away. If she can do this, why does she come here at all—is it to *teach us?*"

I sang, and the Principal turned to my *maestro* with a look of astonishment. "You are right," he said. "She is a musical prodigy."

Instead of taking me to the beginners' class, the Principal introduced me to a class of girls who were second-year students, and in one month I had passed ahead of the whole class.

When the time came for the examinations there promised to be some difficulty in obtaining permission for me, through being so young and in my first year, to sit for a second year's examination. But the faculty rose to the occasion and granted me special permission to compete, with the result that I came through an easy first and secured a tremendous advertisement for the institute. It is still truly said of me at the Conservatoire that Tetrazzini was unable to pass the first year's examination—for I was never troubled to sit for it.

"I HAVE BROUGHT YOU VERDI'S NEW OPERA."

IT was about this time that the Verdi incident happened.

I feel that I must disclose this story, to show how very human are all in the musical profession, from the lowest to the highest.

In those days everyone was talking about a great new opera on which that musical genius, Verdi, was working. It was to be one of the most wonderful operas ever composed, so everyone was saying. We used to discuss it at my home. Our *maestri* at the Conservatoire used to speak eagerly of the forthcoming work. And the whole town generally was in a state of excitement over it.

One day the early post brought to my sister a mysterious scroll which, when it was opened, I was not allowed to see.

"It is a secret," said my sister, mysteriously, and went to her room to pore over its contents. Naturally, a secret of my sister's set me a-tingling with eagerness to know it. Later I heard her go to the piano and begin to sing. I entered the room unobserved, looked over her shoulder, and saw what everyone in the musical world was waiting and longing to see—*Verdi's new opera, "Otello"!*

It was a first copy of a work not yet published. A young man who was a near friend of Eva's was working with the great composer, and had secretly borrowed a copy of the new work to send it to my sister. Though his action was not blameless, his motive, so far as my sister was concerned, was most kind and thoughtful. He argued that by practising on an advance copy of a new

opera my sister would become so proficient that when the secret was at last told to the world she would be the person most likely to be given the principal vocal part.

At first my sister had determined to send it back to her thoughtful admirer, as she said it was not quite playing the game either with Verdi or the other opera-singers. But the temptation to enjoy just one glimpse of the first page of the score was too strong. The opening bars of the beautiful new work arrested her interest, and she quickly ran through the whole score. The next step was to try a few bars on the piano. Soon she was singing so gaily the secret " Otello " that she did not notice that I, too, was listening. It was then too late to keep the secret. So I joined with her in the first rehearsal of the new opera.

That was a great night. We went through the opera several times. My sister Elvera played and Eva and I sang. It must have been grey morning before we were able to put the new work away and go to bed.

As the new opera was now a family secret it was most necessary not to disclose its existence to anyone outside our home. As I was leaving for the Conservatoire, however, I thought, in my girlish mind, how delightful it would be to let my *maestro* have just a peep at the work. I wrapped it up carefully and, carrying it as though it were a piece of delicate china, took it with me to the Academy. At the earliest opportunity I had a private word with my *maestro*. Feeling very important and looking very mysterious, I said that I had some new treasure which would surprise him greatly.

" And what is your surprise, my little prodigy ? " he asked, encouragingly.

" I have brought you Verdi's new opera."

" What ! " he exclaimed, and jumped into the air in his excitement. " Let me see it, quick, quick ! "

I showed it to him and watched his eyes bulging.

" Come in here," he said, and, leaving the class to look after itself, he led the way to one of the rooms where there was a piano with which we could try it over without being disturbed. He sat at the instrument while I sang. At first he played softly and I sang quietly. As we proceeded we entered into the swing of the glorious work and became less cautious. He played the piano with reckless enjoyment, while I sang to the full volume of my voice.

What was to be expected happened. Suddenly hearing the sound as of a heavy man hurrying towards our door, we stopped in alarm.

" Hide it, quick ! There's someone coming ! " ejaculated the *maestro*.

I took the score and quickly thrust it under some cushions. Then we put another old score on to the music-rack. By this time someone was banging heavily on the classroom door.

" Open the door ! Open the door ! This minute ! I wish to enter."

We looked mutely at each other, for we knew the owner of that voice all too well.

The *maestro* went to the door, unlocked it, and in walked *the Principal !* He looked at us both very curiously, and then stalked across to the piano and read the title of the score on the music-rack.

" ' Faust ' ! he exclaimed. ' Faust ' ! It was not ' Faust ' that you were playing." Then he turned to me and said, " Signorina, what were you singing just now ? "

My eyes fell ! I did not know what to say.

The *maestro* attempted to come to my rescue by saying that I was singing a few excerpts from the old operas.

" *Old* operas ! *Old* operas ! Come, come, don't tell me that ! " he growled. " I know every *old* opera that is in existence. That glorious music has never been sung before to my knowledge. Those notes, that harmony ! Have you a new opera here ? "

The Principal looked from one to the other awaiting an answer. There was no help for it. The secret had emerged from my home ; it had to go farther now.

So I told the Principal the whole story. I expected him to be righteously indignant. I did not then know what a spell a new opera by a man like Verdi could cast over anyone in the profession.

The expression on the *maestro's* face when I first showed him the new " Otello " was a sight of wonder, amazement, and delight that was unforgettable. But the Principal ! He was almost delirious. Again the scene I had participated in once before that morning, and, previously, at home, was enacted. The Principal took the new score, glanced through its magic pages, rushed to the door and locked it. Then the three of us went to the piano and we sang the whole of the new opera through again, the Principal loudly expressing his delight at the work as we went along.

" Yes, it's unquestionably Verdi," said the Principal when we had come to the end of the opera, and then he added a sentence which was shortly to be taken up by others and echoed throughout the realm of music. " Verdi, yes, but a new Verdi," he declared. " Our great composer has deserted the old Italian school and is becoming Wagnerian. But what a glorious work, nevertheless. Yes, it's beautiful ! Oh, it will be a huge success."

It was long past lunch-time before I returned to my home with the precious manuscript, for which, by the way, my sister had been vainly searching during my absence.

LEARNING TO BE A *PRIMA DONNA*.

THE hours that I spent in the Conservatoire were very short. I would rise in the morning at seven-thirty and help my mother to cook and prepare the breakfast and to clean the house until eleven o'clock. Housework always fascinated me and still does. Though I own a palace, a mansion, and when travelling stay in the most luxurious hotels, I often lend a hand to the servants who are scrubbing the floors, sweeping the carpets, and cleaning and tidying generally. I used to climb trees and loved it. I still climb the trees in my own orchard at Lugano and help in plucking the season's fruit.

At eleven o'clock I used to be at the Conservatoire and would study and sing there under my *maestro* until about twelve-thirty. Then home to lunch. The afternoon was usually spent with my father, who, besides giving me his books to keep straight, would ask me to do some of the gold embroidery work for the collars of the generals and other great men of the army. From four to five o'clock I would run through the lessons of the morning, at home, for there was nothing to do at the Conservatoire in the afternoon. Every night after supper we had a musical evening. Oh, those jolly musical evenings! Only when the family

"Standing there, the cynosure of every eye in that crowded theatre, I addressed the come to the stage.

went out to pay a visit was there no musical evening at our home. Even then we would all take our music to our friends and pass most of the hours singing, dancing, and playing.

I learned how to be a *prima donna* in the best of all possible schools—the opera-house. My *maestro* used to say that I was born in the opera-house, which was not strictly correct. It was true, however, that I spent more time in the opera-house when I was a child than most singers have done. I have always stated that it was in the opera-house that I made my *début* as a public singer, but when I was in London in October, 1920, an Italian baritone called at my hotel and stated that it was not so, for, previous to my *début* at the Florence Opera House, I had sung with him in a tiny hall at a concert held in a village near to my town. He probably is right, but now I have no recollection of the incident. Since then I have sung in villages, but usually in the open air, because of the difficulty of obtaining a public hall of any size.

In the early days of my teens I thought I should be a contralto. My voice grew to be very much like that of Mme. Clara Butt to-day, but this phase did not last long, and I found that I was soprano again with a very high register. Since those days I have met many sopranos whose voice first gave promise of being contralto, and tenors who, for a little while, were baritones.

MY FIRST APPEARANCE.

I DID not make my *début* in a chorus as most operatic singers have done. My first public appearance, save for the forgotten village incident which I have mentioned, was as a *prima donna* in my own critical, music-loving town of Florence. The opportunity was both spectacular and unexpected. It was Sunday evening. Previously the impresario had met my brother in the town and said: "You must come to 'L'Africana' to-night. The house will be packed. It will be a record night. We have a great *prima donna* who has incessantly practised

conductor thus: 'Don't worry, *maestro*. I know the part thoroughly well. Let me I will play it.'"

the part of Inez for weeks past. She is now as near to perfection as any soprano you will ever hear." My brother came home very excited, bringing with him tickets for the stalls, one for each of us.

As ever, I was the most interested and excited one of the family. All day I was thinking of the *prima donna* whose performance that evening would make her the talk of Florence for weeks to come. How I envied her! I thought of what my brother had said as to her weeks of special preparation for the part. Knowing that I had been singing this opera almost daily ever since I could toddle, I may be excused for feeling that, however much at home this great *prima donna* would be as Inez, she could not feel and know the part better than I. But she was a grown-up woman. I was then only a girl with my hair still falling over my shoulders. I was barely sixteen years of age, and, as I have since been told, looked much younger.

Inside the opera-house at Florence that night were all who mattered in my home town. It was an assembly such as makes a theatre manager feel unusually stern and important. Then it happened!

The orchestra had just finished their scraping and tuning-up preliminaries, obviously conscious that they were very important units in the great opening performance and were all ready to strike forth the opening bars, when a message was whispered into the ear of the conductor. Sitting there in my stall beside my mother, my keen young ears heard something that made my heart leap and then stop. It was to the effect that the *prima donna* had not arrived. In a flash, I was all alert and trembling with excitement. I forgot my youth, my inexperience, my girlish dress, my general unpreparedness. All I could think in that mad rush of eager emotion was: "My chance has come! There is no one here who can take this part except little Tetrazzini." The conductor was moving about in uncontrollable agitation. He clasped and unclasped his hands despairingly, tore his hair, looked apprehensively from the waiting orchestra to the glittering, expectant house. The manager hurried to him with a note, which had just been brought by a messenger. Eagerly I watched the conductor tear the little envelope, snatch out the enclosure, and read its contents. Then his features assumed an expression of tragic despair. He turned to the house and announced with deepest regret that "L'Africana" could not be given that night. He had just received word from the great *prima donna* who was to have played the part of Inez that she had suddenly fallen ill and could not leave her house. A murmur of disappointment ran through the house.

"DON'T WORRY, *MAESTRO*, I KNOW THE PART."

THEN I did something the audacity of which causes me to marvel even to this day. The excitement of the moment was so great that I can scarcely remember with accuracy the details of what happened. I have a dim remembrance that my people tried to check my impetuosity and that I refused to be checked. I remember that I jumped to my feet and then, fearing that I should miss the conductor's eye, leapt on my seat. Standing there, a girlish figure, the cynosure of every eye in that crowded theatre, I addressed the conductor thus: "Don't worry, *maestro*. I know the part thoroughly well. Let me come to the stage. I will play it." I must have spoken very loudly, for even in the gallery my words were plainly heard. Immediately I had spoken the house began to buzz with conversation. "Who is she?" asked some. "It's Tetrazzini," someone exclaimed. "Yes, let her try," said others. And I, quivering with excitement, stood on the cushioned stall, unheeding all, save the conductor, whose yes or no meant everything or nothing, sunshine or storm, joy or sorrow, life or death—to me!

"What are you saying, Tetrazzini? You must be mad!"

"I am not mad," I hurled back. "I know perfectly well that the part of Inez is very difficult. I also know that I can do it. Do not send all these people away without giving me a chance to show them that what I am telling you is true."

The conductor hesitated. He looked at my small, slim figure half doubtfully, while some of my friends in the audience enlisted their own arguments on my behalf.

"The girl is right," shouted one who had heard me sing at the Conservatoire. "She has a voice like liquid gold. And she is an actress as well." Some of the others in the balcony added their quota. "Everybody knows Tetrazzini can sing anything. She's the nightingale of Florence," said one. His remark was generally applauded. I think it must have been the inspiration of the audience that finally decided the conductor to take a step which, though it was not quite so far as I had asked him to go, meant everything to me.

"Very well, little Luisa," he said. "You shall have the part." The audience interrupted with a roar of pleasure. I was all for rushing from my seat to the stage when the *maestro* stopped me. "But not to-night," he said. "I cannot take the responsibility of putting anyone on at this house without a

rehearsal. No performance is better than a first night 'failure.' We will postpone the opening of 'L'Africana' for a few days and you shall come to-morrow to the rehearsals."

My *début* was more of an adventure to me than a solemn performance. As a girl looks forward to her wedding-day had I looked forward to my professional *début*. Few brides and fewer bridegrooms take their wedding-day as the most serious day of their lives. So light-hearted and gay was I on my *début* night that I still marvel at the success which was achieved. From the rise of the curtain to its last drop the performance was acclaimed as a triumph.

Some of the audience left that night declaring that a trick had been played upon them. "We do not believe that this was Tetrazzini's first performance," they said. Their sentiments were taken up in some of the newspapers, which said that, despite the fact that Tetrazzini was announced as a *débutante*, it was too evident, from the way I danced and sang and carried myself in this difficult part, that I was a practised artiste.

MY *DÉBUT* AT ROME AT THE AGE OF 16.

EVENTS moved swiftly after that *début* in Florence. My impresario decided almost immediately that I was already sufficiently accomplished to appear in the capital. Consequently he made arrangements for an early *début* in Rome.

It had been decided to present the same opera as that I had been playing in Florence, "L'Africana," and I was to continue in the part of Inez. At this time the power behind the throne of the opera world was Donna Lina Crispi, a lady who was recognized as the leader of Roman Society. She made it a practice to attend all rehearsals and to criticize freely. I soon found that any suggestion made by her—which suggestion was always based on a very profound knowledge—was law to us all.

There are parts for two leading sopranos in "L'Africana," those of Selina and Inez. At the general rehearsal Selina went terribly flat during the great sextette scene, dragging all down with her, which left me to support alone the whole fabric of the music. After the unaccompanied portion the orchestra failed to take up the accompaniment again. To the *maestro's* curt demand as to why they had failed to come in they replied that the singers had fallen nearly a tone and had left them out in the cold. As we were going out I remember asking what would be the consequences if at the performance the next night the singing went flat again. Then someone standing near said: "Signorina Tetrazzini, when they sing so badly at general rehearsal you can always be sure that the opening performance will go magnificently. It has always been so and it always will be so. I, Donna Lina Crispi, say so." It was the lady autocrat of the opera-house who spoke, and so impressed had I been with her knowledge of opera that I felt her prophecy would be fulfilled.

The morning of the opening performance the conductor, the *maestro* Usiglio, gave me some words of counsel. "During the unaccompanied portion of the great sextette, you must keep your eye on me, and I will give you the cues," said he. "When I hear Selina singing flat I will make a sign for you to sing sharp and this will pull the others up." On reflection it seems that it was asking a very great deal of a girl of sixteen to make her *début* in the capital before the Court and to adjust her voice so as to assist others who might drop out of tune.

It was then that I began to realize first the real meaning of stage fright. Even supposing I did not go wrong myself before that august assembly, I might yet be dragged down to perdition by the others.

The evening came, and the King and Queen came too. I saw them in the Royal box from behind the curtain. I had never seen either of their Majesties before, and the state of my thoughts and feelings at this supreme moment can be easily conjectured. There was so much to think about; the Royal Family, my Rome *début*, the possibility of the company going flat, of my missing the cue from the conductor, my own nerves breaking down and, perhaps, a bad break in my amazing run of good luck. But Donna Lina Crispi was right. We sang our way through "L'Africana" that night in a manner which the Press generally conceded to be almost faultless. Certainly the flattering nature of the language used in describing my work was all that any *débutante* could desire. At the end of the great unaccompanied sextette there was a pause, and the audience, realizing that the intonation had been flawless from beginning to end, then gave forth such a volley of cheers, accompanied by clapping and waving of hands, as is rarely heard in Rome.

It was during that performance that I accidentally produced a phenomenal note. Instead of finishing up on E, as I had intended and as the score ordered, I found myself singing a note a full octave higher, the E alt. The note came as clearly as it did unexpectedly. It was heard with general surprise all over the opera-house, and many people who had been turned away and were listening outside in the hope of hearing some of the higher notes heard it distinctly and discussed it excitedly. "Wherever did you get that note?" I was asked afterwards, to which I

was obliged to answer that I did not know. This answer was absolute truth. I had never tried to get it until then, and did not know I was capable of producing it. When it is achieved, it is usually thin or cloudy. But the note came forth that night as full and round and easy as any of the others. Since then I have touched higher notes without difficulty, but I have never forgotten the surprise I felt when I first produced the E alt.

A ROYAL PROPHECY.

THE next day there came a delightful surprise. I was informed that the Queen wished to hear me sing at a command performance at the Royal Palace. My delight at this new honour was somewhat modified when I heard the name of the opera—Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde"—from which I was expected to sing. Though I was thoroughly at home in most of the great masterpieces, I had never studied the part of Wagner's great heroine. Of course, I had often heard of this tremendous work of Wagner, and was painfully aware that some of the glorious arias written for the famous character, Isolde, were exceedingly difficult.

As I did not know the part, the Queen, confident of my ability quickly to learn it, sent her own *maestro* to instruct me. I applied myself eagerly to the task of learning what I was then informed was the Queen's favourite opera, and it was not long before I was taken to the Royal Palace. There, in the presence of the Royal Family and a large gathering of distinguished persons, I sang some of tragic Isolde's beautiful songs.

During the excitement behind the scenes which followed the close of the performance, a Royal messenger came to me and stated that Her Majesty the Queen commanded my appearance before her. My heart beat fast on hearing the message and I was quivering with excitement as I hurried to obey the Royal command. My head was already whirling with the sensations of the past few days, and I was now fearful as to what I should say when Her Majesty greeted me. I thought out one or two pleasing phrases, but, of course, I forgot them when I was in the presence of the Queen. There was one question which Her Majesty put to me which I wished very much that I had been prepared for.

"You sang marvellously well, Signorina Tetrazzini," said the Queen, smiling graciously as I entered and made my curtsy. Then Her Majesty asked me my age. Like all girls in their early teens and unlike all women in later life, I was not anxious to be thought very young. Without hesitation I told Her Majesty that I was twenty-three. The Queen seemed surprised at my answer. "But you don't look it," she said, so I suppose I must have looked younger than I thought. After this the Queen made a remark which caused me a thrill of pleasure. "I will make a prophecy about you," said the Queen. "I prophesy that you will become a very great artiste and have a very distinguished career."

Needless to say, the kindly words of my Queen occupied my thoughts for a long time after that first pleasant interview.

My impresario, in those days, was greatly jubilant over my success and at the money that was rolling into the box-office at the opera-house. He raised my salary from twenty pounds a month, the figure for which I had been singing in Florence, to forty pounds a month, which then seemed to me to be truly magnificent wages.

MY FIRST VISIT TO RUSSIA.

AFTER spending four sensationally successful years in South America I journeyed on to Russia, where I had been offered a lucrative engagement. It was here that I first sang with my good friends Caruso, the great tenor Massini, now sixty years old, and Battistini, the baritone. Of these three famous singers I can only speak words of praise for their great art, and of thanks for their kindness to me during my first visit to Russia. Caruso, I remember, told me that I must prepare to visit England, where I should soon attain to international fame.

It was about this time that a then well-known soprano who was singing at Petrograd made a thrust at me which, had it succeeded, would probably have ruined my career as a *prima donna*. The opera in which we were playing was "Les Huguenots," a composition which, at the time it was written, was not very favourably received, but has survived to be regarded as Meyerbeer's masterpiece. The part of Valentine, the heroine, was being sung, not by me, but by the *prima donna* to whom I have referred, whose name I advisedly suppress. I was engaged to sing only the smaller soprano parts.

The criticisms of the performance published in the Press on the day succeeding the opening were remarkable. Very little was said of the singing of the *prima donna*, but much was written about my own performance. Most of the critics demanded to hear Tetrazzini in a more important part. Well, the only other important part was that of Valentine, sung by the *prima donna*. As can readily be understood, this artiste did not feel very happy over the Press comments and, as some other leading ladies have done in similar circumstances, probably determined to "nip the ambitious understudy in the bud."

"So anxious for me was the great tenor that he secreted himself behind a tree and whispered encouragingly as I proceeded with the song."

When I met the *diva* the day succeeding the opening, I could tell from the glare of her eyes and her frigid, almost contemptuous, demeanour that she was mortally offended with me, though my only offence was that I had sung my best. Further, I had just returned from what was a triumphant four years of starring in South America, and was, probably, entitled to special notice from the Russian Press. But the jealous *prima donna* could only see someone whom she thought below her securing the praise to which she considered herself entitled. Perhaps she thought I should be asking the management to transpose us. Certain it is that she took a step which she must have bitterly regretted ever afterwards, for it probably was the first unexpected drop down the sharp descent which speedily brought her almost to poverty and want.

The opera that was to have been given a few days afterwards was "The Barber of Seville." As the real *prima donna* professed to be ailing I was asked to practise the principal soprano part, which I did, and by the time the house was due to open I felt ready to sustain this *rôle* with ease. But, at the last moment, the real *prima donna*—who was virtually the director of the house at the time—changed her mind. Without giving a satisfactory reason she informed the company that, instead of giving "The Barber of Seville" we were to produce "Rigoletto" that night.

This news was a bombshell to me. It was now so long since I had sung "Rigoletto" that I had forgotten most of this beautiful opera. There was no time to practise it and the real *prima donna* still professed to be too ill to take the principal part. The newspaper critics had been invited, and so they were to hear me sing in a principal *rôle* for which I was totally unprepared. What was the explanation of this sinister situation? There could only be one solution, I told myself. It was a plot by the principal soprano to make me appear to the greatest possible disadvantage before the important personages and the musical critics of the Russian capital. Briefly I discussed the situation with Battistini and Massini. I told them I was not prepared to take the part in these unexpected circumstances, but they both advised me to make the effort.

"You keep your nerve and you will come through with honours. And we will help you," they declared. As they spoke I felt my spirits rise, as they have often done in circumstances in which I have felt someone has been treating me or a friend unfairly.

"I will sing 'Rigoletto' to-night and sing it to the satisfaction of all," I said to myself, "or I will never sing again."

The curtain went up on a fashionable and crowded house.

Battistini took the part of Rigoletto, the baritone. Massini was the tenor Duke of Mantua, while I was the soprano heroine, Gilda, Rigoletto's daughter. I record it with gratitude that both Massini and Battistini seemed to be as genuinely eager for my success that night as was I.

Particularly in the great soprano aria "Dearest Name" was this desire for my unqualified success shown by Massini. This aria is supposed to be sung while in an ecstasy of love. In it the Duke's name is sung aloud, the singer declaring that it is for ever graven on her heart. While this aria is being sung the Duke should not appear on the stage. So anxious for me, however, was Massini—who knew that if I could produce all the notes of this great aria the success of the rest of the opera was assured—that he decided not to go off the stage. Instead, he secreted himself behind a tree and, thinking to help me, whispered encouragingly as I proceeded with the song. When I realized what Massini was doing for me a wave of gratitude for the veteran tenor swept through me and probably helped me to sing better than was my custom.

MASSINI'S GENEROUS ACTION.

THERE was an amusing scene at the end of the aria, for Massini, despite his long years of opera singing, for once seemed to have completely forgotten that he was on the stage and not in the stalls. No sooner had I finished than he rushed out from behind his tree-screen shouting "Bravo! Bravo, Tetrazzini!" and so led the audience in the crash of applause which followed. It was just the kind of unrehearsed action that one might have expected of the big-hearted Massini. The audience were swift in recognizing the Duke and the motive which inspired him, and I like to think that much of the applause which followed was meant as much for the kindly Massini as for myself.

As Massini and Battistini had foreshadowed, the opera went with a great swing. Each of us forgot many of the words, but our improvisations passed unnoticed. The curtain finally fell between us and a house more than satisfied with our performance. As my readers will have imagined, there were two very eager scrutineers of the Petrograd Press the next morning: the *prima donna* who had decreed that we were to play "Rigoletto" without a rehearsal and myself. I was not in her presence when she read the critics' comments, but I can readily imagine what her thoughts were as she did so, for the writers had eulogized my performance in the same lavish language as had done the journalists of South America during the past few years, and almost to the same extent as did the English and New York writers a few years later.

As for this *diva*, the opera-house saw her no more. Without a word of "good-bye" she packed her boxes and left, giving me a field free from interference and jealousy in high places. And so the experience, which was at first unpleasant, had worked out to my complete satisfaction. The real sufferer—it seemed a case of poetical justice—was the jealous *prima donna*. So far as I remember she never again appeared as a great *diva* in any of the world's capitals. But I saw her again afterwards and, I am glad to reflect, was able to do her a kindly service.

(To be continued.)

The Rough Stuff

A Golfing Story

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrated by E·H·SHEPARD

A YOUNG woman of singular beauty came out of the club-house, carrying a baby swaddled in flannel. As she drew near the table at which the Oldest Member sat, sipping a seltzer-and-lemon, she said to the baby :—

"Chicketty wicketty wicketty wipsy pop!"

In other respects her intelligence appeared to be above the ordinary.

"Isn't he a darling?" she said, addressing the Oldest Member and his companion, a young man in a sweater and golf breeches.

The Sage cast a meditative eye upon the infant. Except to the eye of love, it looked like a skinned poached egg.

"Unquestionably so," he replied. "Is your husband out on the links to-day?"

"Not to-day. He had to see Wilberforce off on the train to Scotland."

"Your brother is going to Scotland?"

"Yes. Ramsden has such a high opinion of the schools up there. I did say that Scotland was a long way off, and he said yes, that had occurred to him, but that we must make sacrifices for Willie's good. He was very brave and cheerful about it. Well, I mustn't stay. There's quite a nip in the air, and Rammikins will get a nasty cold in his precious little button of a nose if I don't walk him about. Say bye-bye to the gentlemen, Rammy!"

The Oldest Member watched her go thoughtfully.

"There *is* a nip in the air," he said, "and, unlike our late acquaintance in the flannel, I am not in my first youth." He led the way into the smoking-room.

"That," he said, "was Mrs. Waters—Ramsden Waters's wife. Sit down and take the weight off your feet, and I will tell you about him. The story illustrates a favourite theory of mine, that it is an excellent thing that women should be encouraged to take up golf. There are, I admit, certain drawbacks attendant on their presence on the links. Lovely Woman undeniably loses in queenly dignity when she fails to slam the ball squarely on the meat. Nevertheless, I hold that the advantages outnumber the drawbacks. Golf humanizes women, humbles their haughty natures, tends, in short, to knock out of their systems a certain modicum of that superciliousness, that swank, which makes wooing a tough proposition for the diffident male. You may have found this yourself?"

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" Well, as a matter of fact," admitted the young man, ' now I come to think of it I have noticed that my Genevieve has shown me a bit more respect since she took up the game. When I drive two hundred and thirty yards after she has taken six sloshes to cover fifty, I sometimes think that a new light comes into her eyes."

" Exactly ! " said the Sage.

FROM earliest youth (said the Oldest Member) Ramsden Waters had always been of a shrinking nature. He seemed permanently scared. Even with other men he was noticeably timid, and with women he comported himself in a manner that roused their immediate scorn and antagonism. It speedily became an article of faith with the feminine population of this locality that Ramsden Waters was an unfortunate incident and did not belong. Finally, after struggling for a time to keep up a connection in social circles, he gave it up and became a sort of hermit. He lived all by himself in a house near the fifteenth green, seeing nobody, going nowhere. His only solace was golf. His late father had given him an excellent education, and, even as early as his seventeenth year, I believe, he was going round difficult courses in bogey. Yet even this admirable gift, which might have done him social service, was rendered negligible by the fact that he was too shy and shrinking to play often with other men. As a rule, he confined himself to golfing by himself in the mornings and late evenings when the links were more or less deserted. Yes, in his twenty-ninth year, Ramsden Waters had sunk to the depth of becoming a secret golfer.

One lovely morning in summer, a scented morning of green and blue and gold, when the birds sang in the trees and the air had that limpid clearness which makes the first hole look about a hundred yards long instead of three hundred and forty-five, Ramsden Waters, alone as ever, stood on the first tee, addressing his ball. For a space he waggled masterfully, then, drawing his club back with a crisp swish, brought it down. And, as he did so, a voice behind him cried :—

" Bing ! "

Ramsden's driver wobbled at the last moment. The ball flopped weakly among the trees on the right of the course. Ramsden turned, to perceive, standing close beside him, a small fat boy in a sailor suit. There was a pause.

" Rotten ! " said the boy, austerely.

Ramsden gulped. And then, suddenly, he saw that the boy was not alone. About a medium approach-putt distant, moving gracefully and languidly towards him, was a girl of such pronounced beauty that Ramsden Waters's heart looped the loop twice in rapid succession. It was the first time that he had seen Eunice Bray, and, like most men who saw her for the first time, he experienced the sensations of one in an express lift at the tenth floor going down, who has left the majority of his internal organs somewhere up on the twenty-second. He felt a dazed emptiness. The world swam before his eyes.

You yourself saw Eunice just now, and, though you are in a sense immune, being engaged to a charming girl of your own, I noticed that you unconsciously braced yourself up and tried to look twice as handsome as Nature ever intended you to. You can imagine, then, the effect which this vision of loveliness had on lonely, diffident Ramsden Waters. It got right in amongst him.

" I'm afraid my little brother spoiled your stroke," said Eunice. She did not speak at all apologetically, but rather as a goddess might have spoken to a swine-herd.

Ramsden yammered noiselessly. As always in the presence of the opposite sex, and more than ever now, his vocal cords appeared to have tied themselves in a knot which would have baffled a sailor and might have perplexed Houdini. He could not even gargle.

" He is very fond of watching golf," said the girl.

She took the boy by the hand, and was about to lead him off, when Ramsden miraculously recovered speech.

" Would he like to come round with me ? " he croaked. How he had managed to acquire the nerve to make the suggestion he could never understand. I suppose that, in certain supreme moments, a sort of desperate recklessness descends on nervous men.

" How very kind of you ! " said the girl, indifferently. " But I'm afraid——"

" I want to go ! " shrilled the boy. " I want to go ! "

Fond as Eunice Bray was of her little brother, I imagine that the prospect of having him taken off her hands on a fine summer morning, when all Nature urged her to sit in the shade on the terrace and read a book, was not unwelcome.

" It would be very kind of you if you would let him," said Eunice. " He wasn't able to go to the circus last week, and it was a great disappointment ; this will do instead."

She turned towards the terrace, and Ramsden, his head buzzing, tottered into the jungle to find his ball, followed by the boy.

I have never been able to extract full particulars of that morning's round from Ramsden. If you speak of it to him, he will wince and change the subject. I know that he sank three balls in the lake at the second hole, and lost another in the woods at the fourth, and I gather that little Wilberforce

"The Sage cast a meditative eye upon the infant. Except to the eye of love, it looked like a skinned poached egg."

kept up an animated flow of conversation throughout. It is certain, moreover, that he conceived an antipathy for the child which time did nothing to dispel. Wilberforce Bray might be the world to his mother, but he was a pain in the neck to Ramsden Waters. Yet he seems to have had presence of mind to pump Wilberforce as to the details of his home life, and by the end of the round he had learned that Eunice and her brother had just come to visit an aunt who lived in the neighbourhood. Their house was not far from the links; Eunice was not engaged to be married; and the aunt made a hobby of collecting dry seaweed, which she pressed and pasted in an album. One sometime thinks that aunts live entirely for pleasure.

At the end of the round Ramsden staggered

on to the terrace tripping over his feet, and handed Wilberforce back in good condition. Eunice, who had just reached the chapter where the hero decides to give up all for love, thanked him perfunctorily without looking up from her book; and so ended the first spasm of Ramsden Waters's life romance.

THERE are few things more tragic than the desire of the moth for the star; and it is a curious fact that the spectacle of a star almost invariably fills the most sensible moth with thoughts above his station. No doubt, if Ramsden Waters had stuck around and waited long enough, there might have come his way in the fullness of time some nice, plain girl, with a squint and a good disposition, who would have been about his form. In his modest day-dreams he had aspired to nothing higher. But the sight of Eunice Bray seemed to have knocked all the sense out of the man. He must have known that he stood no chance of becoming anything to her other than a handy means of getting rid of little Wilberforce now and again. Why, the very instant that Eunice appeared in the place, every eligible bachelor for miles around her tossed his head with a loud, snorting sound, and galloped madly in her direction. Dashing young devils they were, handsome, well-knit fellows with the figures of Greek gods and the faces of movie heroes. Any one of them could have named his own price from the advertisers of collars. They were the sort of young men you see standing grandly beside the full-page picture of the seven-seater Magnifico car in the magazines. And it was against this field that Ramsden Waters, the man with the unshuffled face, dared to pit his feeble personality. One weeps.

Something of the magnitude of the task he had undertaken must have come home to Ramsden at a very early point in the proceedings. At Eunice's home, at the hour when women receive callers, he was, from the start, a mere unconsidered unit in the mob scene. While his rivals clustered thickly about the girl, he was invariably somewhere on the outskirts, listening limply to the aunt. I imagine that seldom has any young man had such golden opportunities of learning all about dried seaweed.

His only consolation was that nobody else, not even the fellows who worked their way right through the jam and got seats in the front row, where they could glare into her eyes and hang on her lips and all that sort of thing, seemed to be making any better progress.

And so matters went on till one day Eunice decided to take up golf. Her motive for doing this was, I believe, simply because Kitty Manders, who had won a small silver cup at a monthly handicap, receiving thirty-six, was always dragging the conversation round to this trophy; and, if there was one firm article in Eunice Bray's simple creed, it was that she would be hanged if she let Kitty, who was by way of being a rival on a small scale, do anything better than she could. I do not defend Eunice, but women are women, and I doubt if any of them really take up golf in that holy, quest-of-the-grail spirit which animates men. I have known girls become golfers as an excuse for wearing pink sweaters, and one at least who did it because she had read in the beauty hints in the evening paper that it made you lissom. Girls will be girls.

Her first lessons Eunice received from the professional, but after that she saved money by distributing herself among her hordes of admirers, who were only too willing to give up good matches to devote themselves to her tuition. By degrees she acquired a fair skill and a confidence in her game which was not altogether borne out by results. From Ramsden Waters she did not demand a lesson. For one thing, it never occurred to her that so poor-spirited a man could be any use at the game; and for another Ramsden was always busy tooling round with little Wilberforce.

Yet it was with Ramsden that she was paired in the first competition for which she entered, the annual Mixed Foursomes. And it was on the same evening that the list of the draw went up on the notice-board that Ramsden proposed.

The mind of a man in love works in strange ways. To you and to me there would seem to be no reason why the fact that Eunice's name and his own had been drawn out of a hat together should so impress Ramsden; but he looked on it as an act of God. It seemed to him to draw them close together, to set up a sort of spiritual affinity. In a word, it acted on the poor fellow like a tonic, and that very night he went round to her house, and having, after a long and extremely interesting conversation with her aunt, contrived to get her alone, coughed eleven times in a strangled sort of way, and suggested that the wedding-bells should ring out.

Eunice was more startled than angry.

"Of course, I'm tremendously complimented, Mr. ——" She had to pause to recall the name, for she had never had the advantage of one of those Correspondence Memory Courses which you see advertised. "Mr.——"

"Waters," said Ramsden, humbly.

"Of course, yes. Mr. Waters. As I say, it's a great compliment——"

"Not at all!"

"A great compliment——"

"No, no!" murmured Ramsden, obsequiously.

"I wish you wouldn't interrupt," snapped Eunice, with irritation. No girl likes to have to keep going back over her speeches. "It's a great compliment, but it is quite impossible."

"Just as you say, of course," agreed Ramsden.

"What," demanded Eunice, "have you to offer me? I don't mean money. I mean something more spiritual. What is there in you, Mr. Walters——"

"Waters."

"Mr. Waters. What is there in you that would repay a girl for giving up the priceless boon of freedom?"

"I know a lot about dried seaweed," suggested Ramsden, hopefully.

Eunice shook her head.

"No," she said, "it is quite impossible. You have paid me the greatest compliment a man can pay a woman, Mr. Waterson——"

"Waters," said Ramsden. "I'll write it down for you."

"Ramsden turned, to perceive, standing close beside him, a small fat boy in a sailor suit. There was a pause. 'Rotten!' said the boy."

" Please don't trouble. I am afraid we shall never meet again——"

" But we are partners in the Mixed Foursomes to-morrow."

" Oh, yes, so we are," said Eunice. " Well, mind you play up. I want to win a cup more than anything on earth."

" Ah ! " said Ramsden, " if only I could win what I want to win more than anything else on earth ! You, I mean," he added, to make his meaning clear. " If I could win you——" His tongue tied itself in a bow-knot round his uvula, and he could say no more. He moved slowly to the door, paused with his fingers on the handle for one last look over his shoulder, and walked silently into the cupboard where Eunice's aunt kept her collection of dried seaweed.

His second start was favoured with greater luck, and he found himself out in the hall, and presently in the cool air of the night, with the stars shining down on him. Had those silent stars ever shone down on a more broken-hearted man ? Had the cool air of the night ever fanned a more fevered brow ? Ah, yes ! or rather, ah, no !

THERE was not a very large entry for the Mixed Foursomes Competition. In my experience, there seldom is. Men are as a rule idealists, and wish to keep their illusions regarding Woman intact ; and it is difficult for the most broad-minded man to preserve a chivalrous veneration for the sex after a woman has repeatedly sliced into the rough and left him a difficult recovery. Women, too—I am not speaking of the occasional champions, but of the average woman, the one with the handicap of forty-three who plays in high-heeled shoes—are apt to giggle when they foozle out of a perfect lie, and this makes for misogyny.

Only eight couples assembled on the tenth tee (where our foursome matches start) on the morning after Ramsden Waters had proposed to Eunice. Six of these were negligible, consisting of males of average skill and young women who played golf because it kept them out in the fresh air. Looking over the field, Ramsden felt that the only serious rivalry was to be feared from Marcella Bingley and her colleague, a sixteen-handicap youth named George Perkins, with whom they were paired for the opening round. George was a pretty indifferent performer, but Marcella, a weather-beaten female with bobbed hair and the wrists of a welter-weight pugilist, had once appeared in the Women's Open Championship and swung a nasty iron.

Ramsden watched her drive a nice, clean shot down the middle of the fairway, and spoke earnestly to Eunice.

" What we've got to do is to play steadily," he said. " Don't try any fancy shots. Go for safety. Miss Bingley is a tough proposition, but George Perkins is sure to foozle a few, and, if we play safe, we've got 'em. The other's don't count."

You notice something odd about this speech ? Something in it strikes you as curious ? Precisely. It affected Eunice Bray in the same fashion. In the first place, it contains forty-four words, some of them of two syllables, others of even greater length. In the second place, it was spoken crisply, almost commandingly, without any of that hesitation and stammering which usually characterized Ramsden Waters's utterances. Eunice was puzzled. She was also faintly resentful. True, there was not a word in what he had said that was calculated to bring the blush of shame to the cheek of modesty ; nevertheless, she felt vaguely that Ramsden Waters had exceeded the limits. She eyed him coldly, but he had turned to speak to little Wilberforce, who was to accompany them on the round.

" And you, my lad," said Ramsden, curtly, " you kindly remember that this is a competition, and keep your merry flow of conversation as much as possible to yourself. You've got a bad habit of breaking into small-talk when a man's addressing the ball."

" If you think that my brother will be in the way—— " began Eunice, coldly.

" Oh, I don't mind him coming round," said Ramsden, " if he keeps quiet."

Eunice gasped. She had not played enough golf to understand how that noblest of games changes a man's whole nature when on the links. She could not know that the mere feel of a driver made Ramsden Waters a different being. She was thinking of something crushing to say to him, when he advanced to the tee to drive off.

He drove a perfect ball, hard and low, with a lot of roll. Even Eunice was impressed.

" Good shot, partner ! " she said.

Ramsden was apparently unaware that she had spoken. Eunice bit her lip. She was piqued. She felt as if she had patted the head of a pet lamb, and the lamb had turned and bitten her in the finger.

" I said ' Good shot, partner ! ' " she repeated, coldly.

" Yes," said Ramsden, " but don't talk. It prevents one concentrating." He turned to Wilberforce. " And don't let me have to tell *you* that again ! " he said.

" Wilberforce has been like a mouse ! "

" That is what I complain of," said Ramsden. " Mice make a beastly scratching sound, and that's what he was doing when I drove that ball."

" He was only playing with the sand in the tee-box."

" Well, if he does it again I shall be reluctantly compelled to take steps."

They walked in silence to where the ball had stopped. It was nicely perched up on the grass, and to have plunked it on to the green with an iron should have been, for any reasonable golfer, the work of a moment. Eunice, however, only succeeded in slicing it feebly into the rough.

Ramsden reached for his niblick and plunged into the jungle. And presently, as if it had been shot up by some convulsion of Nature, the ball, accompanied on the early stages of its journey by about a pound of mixed mud, grass, and pebbles, soared through the air and fell on the green. But the mischief had been done. Miss Bingley, putting forcefully, put the opposition ball down for a three, and won the hole.

EUNICE now began to play better, and, as Ramsden was on the top of his game, a ding-dong race ensued for the remainder of the first nine holes. The Bingley-Perkins combination, owing to some inspired work by the female of the species, managed to keep their lead up to the tricky ravine hole, but there George Perkins, as might have been expected of him, deposited the ball right in among the rocks, and Ramsden and Eunice drew level. The next four holes were halved, and they reached the club-house with no advantage to either side. Here there was a pause while Miss Bingley went to the professional's shop to have a tack put into the leather of her mashie, which had worked loose. George Perkins and little Wilberforce, who believed in keeping up their strength, melted silently away in the direction of the refreshment bar, and Ramsden and Eunice were alone.

The pique which Eunice had felt at the beginning of the game had vanished by now. She was feeling extremely pleased with her performance on the last few holes, and would have been glad to go into the matter fully. Also, she was conscious of a feeling, not perhaps of respect so much as condescending tolerance, towards Ramsden. He might be a pretty minus quantity in a drawing-room or at a dance, but in a bunker or out in the open with a cleek, Eunice felt, you'd be surprised. She was just about to address him in a spirit of kindliness, when he spoke.

" Better keep your brassy in the bag on the next nine," he said. " Stick to the iron. The great thing is to keep 'em straight ! "

Eunice gasped. Indeed, had she been of a less remarkable beauty, one would have said that she snorted. The sky turned black, and all her amiability was swept away in a flood of fury. Ever since she had made her first drive at golf she had prided herself on her use of the wood. Her brother and her brassy were the only things she loved. And here was this man deliberately—— Eunice choked.

" Mr. Waters ! "

Before they could have further speech George Perkins and little Wilberforce ambled in a bloated way out of the club-house.

" I've had three ginger-ales," observed the boy. " Where do we go from here ? "

" Our honour," said Ramsden.

Eunice took out her driver without a word. Her lithe figure was tense with emotion. She swung vigorously, and pulled the ball far out on to the fairway of the ninth hole.

" Even off the tee," said Ramsden, " you had better use an iron. You must keep 'em straight ! "

Their eyes met. Hers were glittering with the fury of a woman scorned. His were cold and hard. And suddenly, as she looked at his awful, pale, set golf-face, something seemed to snap in Eunice. A strange sensation of weakness and humility swept over her. So might the cave-woman have felt when, with her back against a cliff and unable to dodge, she watched her suitor take his club in the inter-locking grip and, after a preliminary waggle, start his back-swing.

The fact was that, all her life, Eunice had been accustomed to the homage of men. From the time she had put her hair up, every man she had met had grovelled before her ; and she had acquired a mental attitude towards the other sex which was a blend of indifference and contempt. For the cringing specimens who curled up and died all over the hearth-rug if she spoke a cold word to them she had nothing but scorn. She dreamed wistfully of those brusque cavemen of whom she read in the novels which she took out of the village circulating library. The female novelist who was at that time her favourite always supplied with each chunk of wholesome and invigorating fiction one beetle-browed hero with a grouch and a scowl, who rode wild horses over the countryside till they foamed at the mouth, and treated women like dirt. That, Eunice had thought yearningly, as she talked to youths whose spines turned to gelatine at one glance from her bright eyes, was the sort of man she wanted to meet and never seemed to come across.

Of all the men whose acquaintance she had made recently, she had despised Ramsden Waters most. Where others had grovelled, he had tied himself into knots. Where others had gazed at her like sheep, he had goggled at her like a kicked spaniel. She had only permitted him to hang around because he seemed so fond of little Wilberforce. And here he was, ordering her about

and piercing her with gimlet eyes, for all the world as if he were Claude Delamere, in the thirty-second chapter of "The Man of Chilled Steel"—the one where Claude drags Lady Matilda round the smoking-room by her hair because she gave the rose from her bouquet to the Italian Count.

She was half cowed, half resentful.

"Mr. Winklethorpe told me I was very good with the wooden clubs," she said, defiantly.

"He's a great kidder," said Ramsden.

He went down the hill to where his ball lay. Eunice proceeded direct for the green. Much as she told herself that she hated this man, she never questioned his ability to get there with his next shot.

George Perkins, who had long since forfeited any confidence which his partner might have reposed in him, had topped his drive, leaving Miss Bingley a difficult second out of a sandy ditch. The hole was halved.

THE match went on. Ramsden won the short hole, laying his ball dead with a perfect iron shot; but at the next, the long dog-leg hole, Miss Bingley regained the honour. They came to the last all square.

As the match had started on the tenth tee, the last hole to be negotiated was, of course, what in the ordinary run of human affairs is the ninth, possibly the trickiest on the course. As you know, it is necessary to carry with one's initial wallop that combination of stream and lake into which so many well-meant drives have flopped. This done, the player proceeds up the face of a steep slope, to find himself ultimately on a green which looks like the sea in the storm-scene of a melodrama. It heaves and undulates, and is altogether a nasty thing to have happen to one at the end of a gruelling match. But it is the first shot, the drive, which is the real test, for the water and the trees form a mental hazard of unquestionable toughness.

George Perkins, as he addressed his ball for the vital stroke, manifestly wobbled. He was scared to the depths of his craven soul. He tried to pray, but all he could remember was the hymn for those in peril on the deep, into which category he feared his ball would shortly fall. Breathing a few bars of this, he swung. There was a musical click, and the ball, singing over the water like a bird, breasted the hill like a homing aeroplane, and fell into the centre of the fairway within easy distance of the plateau green.

"Nice work, partner," said Miss Bingley, speaking for the first and last time in the course of the proceedings. She was a grim, silent player, suspected of Scotch blood.

George unravelled himself with a modest simper. He felt like a gambler who has placed his all on a number at roulette and sees the white ball tumble into the correct compartment.

Eunice moved to the tee. In the course of the last eight holes the girl's haughty soul has been rudely harrowed. She had foozled two drives and three approach-shots and had missed a short putt on the last green but three. She had that consciousness of sin which afflicts the golfer off his game, that curious self-loathing which humbles the proudest.

Even as her driver rose above her shoulder, she was acutely aware that she was making eighteen out of the twenty-three errors which complicate the drive at golf. As the club began to descend, she perceived that she had underestimated the total of her errors. And when the ball, badly topped, bounded down the slope and entered the muddy water like a timid diver on a cold morning, she realized that she had a full hand. There are twenty-three things which it is possible to do wrong in the drive, and she had done them all.

Silently, Ramsden Waters made a tee and placed thereon a new ball. He was a golfer who rarely despaired; but he was playing three, and his opponents' ball would undoubtedly be on the green, possibly even dead, in two. Nevertheless, perhaps by a supreme drive and one or two miracles later on, the game might be saved. He concentrated his whole soul on the ball.

I need scarcely tell you that Ramsden Waters pressed.

Swish came the driver. The ball, fanned by the wind, rocked a little on the tee, then settled down in its original position. Ramsden Waters, usually the most careful of players, had missed the globe.

For a moment there was a silence—a silence which Ramsden had to strive with an effort almost physically painful not to break. Rich oaths surged to his lips, and blistering maledictions crashed against the back of his clenched teeth.

The silence was broken by little Wilberforce.

One can only gather that there lurks in the supposedly innocuous amber of ginger-ale an elevating something which the temperance reformers have overlooked. Wilberforce Bray had, if you remember, tucked away no fewer than three in the spot where they would do most good. One presumes that the child, with all that stuff surging about inside him, had become thoroughly above himself. He uttered a merry laugh.

"Never hit it!" said little Wilberforce.

He was kneeling beside the tee-box as he spoke, and now, as one who has seen all that there is to be seen, and turns, sated, to other amusements, he moved round and began to

"'How dare you kick my brother?' 'Madam,' he said, 'in similar circumstances I would have kicked the Archangel Gabriel!'"

play with the sand. The spectacle of his alluring trouser-seat was one which a stronger man would have found it hard to resist. To Ramsden Waters it had the aspect of a formal invitation. For one moment his number eleven golf-shoe, as supplied to all the leading professionals, wavered in mid-air, then crashed home.

Eunice screamed.

"How dare you kick my brother!"

Ramsden faced her, stern and pale.

"Madam," he said, "in similar circumstances I would have kicked the Archangel Gabriel!"

Then, stooping to his ball, he picked it up.

"The match is yours," he said to Miss Bingley, who, having paid no attention at all to the drama which had just concluded, was practising short chip-shots with her mashie-niblick.

He bowed coldly to Eunice, cast one look of sombre satisfaction at little Wilberforce, who was painfully extricating himself from a bed of nettles into which he had rolled, and strode off. He crossed the bridge over the water, and stalked up the hill.

Eunice watched him go, spell-bound. Her momentary spurt of wrath at the kicking of her brother had died away, and she wished she had thought of doing it herself.

How splendid he looked, she felt, as she watched Ramsden striding up to the club-house—just like Carruthers Mordyke after he had flung Ermyntrude Vanstone from him in chapter forty-one of "Grey Eyes that Gleam." Her whole soul went out to him. This was the sort of man she wanted as a partner in life. How grandly he would teach her to play golf! It had sickened her when her former instructors, prefacing their criticism with glutinous praise, had mildly suggested that some people found it a good thing to keep the head still when driving; and that, though her methods were splendid, it might be worth trying. They had spoken of her keeping her eye on the ball as if she were doing the ball a favour. What she wanted was a great, strong, rough brute of a fellow who would tell her not to move her damned head; a rugged Viking of a chap who, if she did not keep her eye on the ball, would black it for her. And Ramsden Waters was such a one. He might not look like a Viking, but, after all, it is the soul that counts, and, as this afternoon's experience had taught her, Ramsden Waters had a soul that seemed to combine in equal proportions the outstanding characteristics of Nero, a wild-cat, and the second mate of a tramp steamer.

THAT night Ramsden Waters sat in his study, a prey to the gloomiest emotions. The golf had died out of him by now, and he was reproaching himself bitterly for having ruined for ever his chances of winning the only girl he had ever loved. He groaned, and tried to forget his sorrows by forcing himself to read. But it was no good. He could find solace neither in Braid "On the Pivot," nor in Duncan "On the Divot." He was just about to give it up and go to bed, though it was only nine o'clock, when the telephone-bell rang.

"Hallo!"

"Is that you, Mr. Waters? This is Eunice Bray." The receiver shook in Ramsden's hand. "I've just remembered—weren't we talking about something last night—didn't you ask me to marry you or something? I know it was something."

Ramsden gulped three times.

"I did," he replied, hollowly.

"We didn't settle anything, did we?"

"Eh?"

"I say, we sort of left it kind of open."

"Yuk!"

"Well, would it bore you awfully," said Eunice's soft voice, "to come round now and go on talking it over?"

Ramsden tottered.

"We shall be quite alone," said Eunice. 'Little Wilberforce has gone to bed with a headache."

Ramsden paused a moment to disentangle his tongue from the back of his neck.

"I'll come straight over!" he said, huskily.

ACROSTICS.

Our seventeenth series of acrostics begins with No. 93, printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of twelve guineas will be awarded to the most successful solvers.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 93.

A month of gales, a month of showers,
With promises of coming flowers.

1. Atlantic island tells of cake.
2. A continental city take.
3. The roads it presses, and the pitch.
4. An isle—blue grotto tells us which.
5. A salutation brings a storm.
6. A Wiltshire town is more than warm.
7. What misery is sleeplessness!
8. Invention's mother? Rather less.
9. In twelve the answer will be found.
10. Twenty of these will make a pound.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 93 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, The Strand Magazine, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on April 8th.

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym, which should consist of one word.

Answer to No. 92.

1.	L	oa	F
2.	I	shopr	I
3.	T	ai	N
4.	T	oundin	G
5.	L	ede	E
6.	E	she	R

Notes.—Light 2. Bishopric, see; shop. 3. Tain, in Scotland, is the Scandinavian *Thing*; stain. 4. To Undine; astounding, startling. 5. Tweedledum and Tweedledee; River Tweed; ledum, the plant. 6. Mole. The word contains "she."

"Extractive" is accepted for the sixth light of No. 90.

Solvers are requested to send, with their answers to No. 93, their real names and addresses also. Unless postcards are used, these should be written at the back of their solutions.

As the Post Office will not now permit acrostic answers to be sent in open envelopes for a halfpenny, solutions should be sent either as ordinary letters or on postcards.

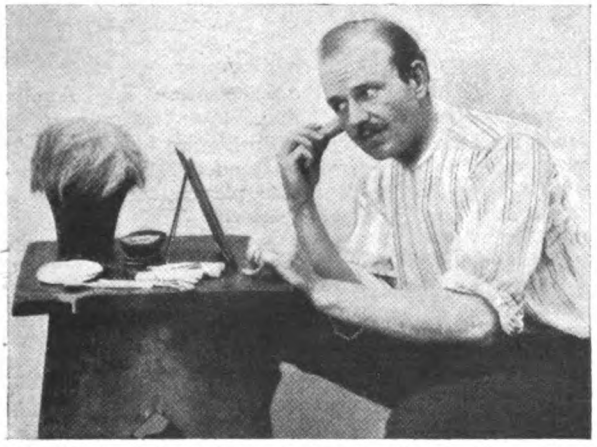
The A.E. will be grateful if solvers will kindly avoid the use of very flimsy note-paper.

Making-up for the Cinema

by M. OWSTON-BOOTH.

IF there is any one branch of motion-picture art more underestimated than another by a public which, however appreciative, has long ceased to marvel at the effects presented, it is making-up.

To the artiste of the legitimate stage making-up is an established art, with a history and consequent traditions. There are classic examples of the genius that has worked amazing transformations with grease-paint and pencil and crêpe hair. There is a certain definite technique, governed by the more or less stereotyped lighting of the stage and the distance that intervenes between artiste and audience.



Mr. Lucien Littlefield applying the "ground-tone" of grease-paint.

But the motion-picture artiste works through a new medium and is still a pioneer. Effects are obtained by experimentation rather than by rule, for make-up has to keep pace with the evolution of lighting and photography. This, in addition to the fact that the all-seeing eye of the camera makes difficulties where there are none for the stage-player and necessitates much more subtle workmanship.

It not infrequently happens that a screen artiste must spend several hours creating and perfecting a make-up. This means that he or she must reach the studio just so long before the rest of the company—and nine o'clock is the usual hour at which regular work begins!

Touching-up the eyelids.

No dire results would accrue to the slight variation from night to night in the stage artiste's paint and powder, but in motion-picture work a make-up must be donned with exactitude for so long as it is required in the story. The scenes of a picture are produced, not in the sequence in which they appear on the screen, but in the order most convenient to the producer, and it might happen that a certain scene made on Monday would, in the completed film, be in juxtaposition to one made on the following Friday, and you can imagine the calamitous effect of Monday's sunken cheeks merging, in a single second, into Thursday's rounded ones.

The difficulties in this direction are magnified a thousand times when a dual *rôle* is essayed. For "Uncle Tom's Cabin" Marguerite Clark had to exchange the black skin and tousled locks of Topsy for the fair complexion and golden curls of Little Eva, and *vice-versa*, on an average of fourteen times a day during the

Making-up for the Cinema

Making wrinkles.

Putting on the putty nose.

Applying a high-light.

entire production. In making " Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde " John Barrymore spent more time in his dressing-room building up the respective characters upon his countenance than he spent before the camera.

Generally speaking, however, it is not the stars of the screen who have most to do with make-up. At least, that is how it has been in the past. Popular players have held the conviction that character-work was not wanted of them by the public, which pays—they contended—to see them as they are and would be disappointed if their personalities were merged into fictitious ones—though nowadays many of them are adopting a different attitude. Hence the character-work became more or less the monopoly of the lesser lights, generally members of a stock company who could be depended upon for conscientious and consistent portrayal of any part offered. But the public is tiring of the *matinée* idol hero and the be-ringleted *ingénue*, and it is becoming pretty generally recognized that the stars who would retain their eminence must do more imaginative, more creative, work before the camera. Concurrently these lesser lights who have laboured unsparingly in " supporting " *rôles*, assuring the success of many a poor story by their extraordinarily fine characterizations, are reaping their over-due reward.

Such a man is Lucien Littlefield, whose character portrayals in recent Paramount and Artcraft pictures have made him one of Screenland's finest character actors. By the very genuineness of his characterizations Mr. Littlefield often fails to receive full credit from the public. Of this here is an illustrative incident. The actor recently attended a theatre where a picture in which he played the part of a ruffian was being shown. The following remark, from one woman to another, reached his ears :—

" Gracious ! Where did they get that wretch ? If I were a leading woman I would refuse to work with a man like that."

Mr. Littlefield believes that to succeed in the art of making-up, a person must be naturally gifted, just as a painter must be naturally gifted in order to do worth-while things with paint and canvas. It is not everyone who can be a successful make-up artist. That is why there are still many players on the screen who serve as continual reminders to the audience that it is observing just a picture and picture people. The whole illusion built up by author, director, cameramen, and the rest of the acting company is broken by the obtrusion of artifice in a single character.

There are certain fundamentals, however, which once learnt should enable every conscientious player to achieve, at any rate, a passable result, whether or not there is capacity for anything more artistic. It is carelessness or ignorant conceit that contrives such blatant evidences of make-up as pencilled eye-shadows, beads of black upon the lashes, and a greasy smear of rouge upon the lips—a combination familiar to all picture-goers.

The first factor in screen as in stage make-up is the grease-paint. For an ordinary make-up the " ground-work " is usually obtained by the use of a yellowish paint (technically known as No. 5), which, when

Trimming the crêpe-hair beard.

Building the eyebrows.

Making-up the hat.

powdered, produces a cream-coloured effect, not far removed from the natural colour of the skin.

The "straight" make-up is completed over this "ground-tone" by a careful lining of the eyes and lips and a darkening and stiffening of the eyelashes with a black paint which is applied warm and moist and allowed to dry on. But this apparently simple process is varied and individualized by almost every screen artiste, according to their photographic qualities. A thin face will be made to look more rounded by applying the grease-paint at the back of the face, laying it heavily about the jaw-line and extending it back on the neck. Thinning effects are obtained by the reverse process; that is, applying the paint to the front of the cheeks and working it back, thinly, to the ears and jaw-line. A too prominent chin can be reduced by heavy shadowing above. Arched eyebrows, considered so beautiful in real life, yet photographing with an absurdly strained and startled appearance, are persuaded to a lower altitude by grease-paint and pencil. When wearing light clothes an actress will generally apply rouge under the chin to prevent "halation," a blurred effect caused by the reflection on the face from white shoulders and arms. It is as a provision against halation, by the way, that white articles are rigidly excluded from a screenic setting. Table-cloths, curtains, even shirt-fronts, handkerchiefs, and "white" wigs are tinted pink or yellow in the studio.

The finished character.

Sydney Fairbrother, the well-known actress, who has achieved many triumphs of make-up, tells an amusing story of her complete amazement when the director of the first film in which she appeared sent her back to her dressing-room to dip her apron in tea!

The schooling of a make-up artist is never completed. With each new *rôle* there is something new discovered or contrived. "My face is part of my stock-in-trade," says Miss Fairbrother. "Just as the mechanic knows every wheel and spring of the machinery of which he has charge, so must I be familiar with every line and corner of my face, by which I express my thoughts and emotions, and by which, remember, I earn my living. Every time I have occasion to use my mirror I study my features carefully, so that I know all my defects as well as my good points, and am able to make the most of them for the purpose of my art. Frankly, I have still a lot to learn in the film world. Different producers have

different ideas upon the subject of make-up, and whenever I go to a strange studio I always make a point of ascertaining the producer's requirements before I touch my grease-paints. It all depends upon the lighting, you see."

One of the chief things to be learnt in character make-up is the principle of high and low lights. Under the arc-lamps of the studios certain colours register as shadows or hollows, whilst certain

Miss Sydney Fairbrother about to make-up.

The "first coat" of grease-paint.

High-lights that force up the lines of the face.

Darkening the eyelashes.

others create the opposite illusion. The shadows are called low lights and the outstanding effects high lights. Wrinkles, lines, scars, sunken cheeks, overhanging brows, etc., are wrought upon the face by these means. Low lights are generally produced with brown paint, though red is also useful for this purpose, and is known to hide many a double chin from the camera's eye. Light blue and white are most commonly used to make high lights. An interesting illustration of how the principle works is found in the fact that a brown line, edged on one side with white, gives the effect of a wrinkle, whilst a white line, edged with brown, makes a scar.

The importance of "making-up the mind" simultaneously with the face is obvious when it is considered that as regards wrinkles and lines make-up must only be used as an accentuating agent. An actor should never make a wrinkle where it would not naturally occur when the face was distorted to suit the character played. It sometimes happens, however, that two different characters can be played in the same make-up with a change of clothes and coiffure and a slight alteration of expression which, without changing the features or the lines of the face, makes the radical change illustrated by the last three of the accompanying photographs of Miss Fairbrother. The

The character completed.

An alteration in the coiffure and clothes.

The result—an entirely **different type.**

change is more that of health and mental state than of age or type.

Artificial hair is used as little as possible in motion-picture work. Producers will never permit the wearing of a wig if the player's own hair can possibly be adapted to the needs of the character, since in a "close-up" a person is magnified many times, and the substitution of a wig for real hair is almost sure to be detected.

For similar reasons the ideal screen beard is a real beard. In a forthcoming picture entitled " The Teaser," twelve bearded faces were required, and the director insisted upon the players growing this item of their make-up. To give their beards the unkempt appearance desired each actor clipped small tufts off his growth every few days.

A faked beard demands a stupendous amount of toil if it is to be artistic. The crêpe hair of stage association is going out of fashion in favour of human hair, which is applied over a coating of spirit gum, two or three strands being attached at a time until the entire beard is built up. The same system is used, of course, for moustaches and whiskers. During the first day of wearing the gum dries hard, and the beard can be removed intact and applied on succeeding occasions with little trouble. As Mr. Littlefield points out, there are hundreds of different kinds of beards and moustaches, and to get the proper effect for a particular character an actor must make a tireless study of types.

It is not known to many that facial expressions can be obtained by attaching strings to certain muscles with putty. These strings are drawn taut and tied behind the head. Chinese eyes often originate thus ! Other radical changes of feature can be brought about by the use of specially made false teeth, of which every make-up artist has a large collection. One of the players in " The Teaser " creates a wonderful illusion of a blind eye by pasting a strip of tailors' mending tissue over the feature and blending his make-up around the edges of it in such a way that the eye seems quite dead and covered with a natural film. Another useful make-up " property " is the specially-prepared putty, of which noses, chins, high cheek-bones, and prominent brows are built up beneath the grease-paint. These artificial features are so carefully moulded that, even in a close-up, they defy detection, being provided with perfectly natural-looking pores made with some finely-pointed instrument.

Broadly speaking, character-work involves the make-up of not only the face and neck but the hands and even the wardrobe. As Mr. Hyde in " Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," John Barrymore appears with hideous bony claws, emaciated and long-fanged, and his clothes wear a wonderful make-up wrought with soap, dirt, and a sharp file.

The make-up of clothes is almost an art in itself, demanding a knowledge of psychology and a keen insight into the way in which garments reflect, not only in style and shape, but in actual wear and tear, the personalities of their owners.

The Hon. Member for Outside Left

by SYDNEY HORLER

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK INSALL

THE match which the Hon. Martin Dale had struck to light his cigar burned unheeded until it fell from the scorched finger. In company with twenty thousand other mesmerized spectators, Dale had followed the spell-binding dribble of the home centre-forward with so much interest that he had become oblivious of everything else.

The weariness of spirit and body which had pressed so heavily upon him during the last few days vanished in that moment. A footballer himself, he shared as only a real enthusiast could share the intense longing the crowd had that their team should win. In the universal excitement that prevailed his identity seemed not only forgotten, but ignored. If he had been less interested himself, he would probably have been thankful for that fact.

The Hon. Martin Dale had been in Portbury a week. It had not been a pleasant week. The agent of the political party under whose colours the son of the Earl of Wronsborough had been persuaded to woo the free and enlightened voters of that busy and somewhat sordid Midland town had confessed at the start that the job was likely to be difficult. Difficult! During the past week Dale had smiled ironically when the word had come to his mind; so far from appreciating the distinguished presence of the Hon. Martin Dale amongst them, the free and enlightened Portbury voters had given every indication that they resented it.

Dale had treated the business as a joke at first. He possessed no great personal faith in the "material" which Hornsby, the Blue agent, had served up to him by the yard—he had too independent a mind for party politics—and but for the fact that his father, the Earl, had been so keen upon his being adopted as the party candidate, he would never have troubled himself. He would probably have been playing football with the Strollers, and having a good time generally.

So, while he felt certain that presently he would be held up as a laughing-stock not only to the political but to the larger world, he had continued to woo the voters of Portbury. It was hopeless, he knew, but he was not to be frightened out of it. He was going to write his imprint on that grim and sordid town.

For the immediate present, as I have said, he had achieved forgetfulness through the magic thrill of football. All good football carries the real enthusiast away, but in the present case there was far more at stake than the usual League points. Although he had only been in the town a week, Dale had learned that the sporting soul of Portbury was sick. Disaster had overtaken the football team which was the pride and delight of that grim workshop of the manufacturing Midlands. For many years Portbury had held a proud place beside the football aristocrats of the First Division of the English League, but a heavy-handed Fate had dealt the team many bitter blows this season. In this match with the Wanderers they were fighting tooth and nail; and if that Slough of Despond, the Second Division, was not to swallow them up, they would have to continue to fight tooth and nail.

Primarily, Dale was a sporting enthusiast, and the sympathy of the sportsman is ever with the bottom dog. Moreover, so far as the town was concerned, he was very much of a bottom dog himself. Forgetting the personal indignities to which he had been subjected during the past week by many of the men around him, he joined his heartening cries to the rest of the crowd in the hope that the home team would gain a much-needed win.

But the courage of the players and the frenzied cheers of the crowd were alike of no avail. Once having secured the lead, the Wanderers kept it. Their goal might have been a rock upon which all the restless surging of the home forwards beat in vain. Five minutes from time the score was still 2—1 against Portbury.

An exclamation from a man near him in the enclosure made the Hon. Martin Dale turn his head sideways and upwards. In that moment the flushed face of a girl bent down to him from the grand stand.

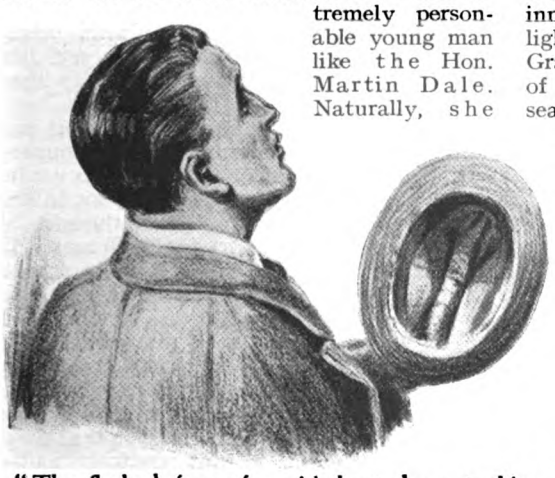
Instinctively, he raised his hat—to receive, in return, the coldest of acknowledgments.

"That's Sir Philip Grayson's daughter, that is," said a voice; "a reg'lar, proper sport, she is, an' no bloomin' error!" Beaming expansively, the bearer of intelligence glanced from the girl in the grand stand to the man he intended to enlighten.

The next moment the informant's jaw had dropped. In the man to whom he was speaking he had recognized the candidate for Parliamentary honours whom he had baited with so much whole-hearted enthusiasm at the meeting on the previous evening. Muttering incoherently to himself, he wriggled away.

A flicker of a smile twitched Dale's lips. He knew who the girl was—knew her to be not only the daughter of his chief opponent, but to be also his personal enemy. According to Hornsby, there were many forces at work against him in Portbury, but the most potent of all was Miss Phyllis Grayson.

SINCE, to scientist and magazine-reader alike, woman is the most bafflingly-interesting problem on earth, a little space may be allowed to set forth why Phyllis Grayson, who was a sportswoman, highly intelligent, and withal beautiful, should be at such variance with an extremely personable young man like the Hon. Martin Dale. Naturally, she would support her father, who was this personable young man's opponent in the political arena, but——



"The flushed face of a girl bent down to him from the grand stand."

The invitation to stand as a Blue candidate for the Parliamentary seat of Portbury came to the Hon. Martin Dale whilst he was on a flying visit to Paris. His travelling companion was Dudley Mainwaring. The latter was inclined to be satirical.

"Filthy hole!" he said, in characteristically breezy fashion; "I'll bet you won't stick it a week, Dale. Portbury is the sort of show that you have to get accustomed to by degrees. But I have a perfectly topping scheme—my people have a place nine or ten miles out; come and stay with us and have a look round. You needn't mention that you are going to put up for M.P.! Have a bit of fun before they serve the overripe eggs to you, anyway! What do you say?"

The programme appealed to the prospective candidate—especially that portion of it which suggested that he should maintain his *incognito* whilst at Overdean.

He did not know it at the time, but trouble, dire trouble, was to come of this innocent camouflage. He had frankly delighted in the company of Miss Phyllis Grayson; the fact that she was the daughter of his prospective chief opponent for the seat of Portbury had not detracted from his pleasure in the companionship. Of course, he might have told her—but why introduce such a perfectly appalling subject as politics into pleasant conversations?

He had never bothered to look at the thing from the girl's point of view. That was why the letter when it came gave him the shock of his life:—

> "*I did not think that you were a coward—a man afraid to come out into the open*" (she wrote).

When the Hon. Martin Dale met Miss Phyllis Grayson in the street, the same day as he had received that bombshell of a letter, he determined to ask her what she meant by spoiling a perfectly

good friendship in this fashion. He was determined, I say—but, apparently, so was the girl: she swept by him without a vestige of recognition. And from that day onwards, the only sign she gave was a heightened colour in each cheek as she passed him by. The Hon. Martin Dale was as puzzled as you or I might have been. Puzzled at first, and then more determined than ever.

AS the babel of sound beat about his ears, the Hon. Martin Dale permitted himself an ironical smile. The most pregnant phrase in a piquant letter he had recently received came back to him. Well, he had certainly "come out into the open" this time!

His amazing appearance at outside left for the Portbury Football Club, however, was apparently as unfortunate as his appearances as a Blue candidate for Parliamentary honours had been. A deaf man could have caught the remarks of the seething crowd.

The mood of the spectators was distinctly hostile. They had come to see a famous professional "star" operating on the left wing. This man, recently transferred to the club at a high figure, had been expected to remove the weakness which had been apparent all through the season. That the newcomer should break down seriously in health before he could kick a ball for his new club was the heaviest blow that the remorseless Fate which had been pursuing the team all that weary year had dealt Portbury. The latter's supporters groaned in public and cursed in private at the news.

But two wrongs won't make a right. In the opinion of the crowd, playing this gilded amateur at outside left was an even more fatal mistake than buying a professional who was obviously unsound. Oh, yes, they all knew that the Hon. Martin Dale had played for Oxford University before the war, and had been pronounced one of the most brilliant amateur forwards of the season—but this game with the Swifts was no Take-It-Easy Friendly; it was a desperate football duel, upon the result of which hung the most momentous crisis in the history of the club.

Adversity hardens and tempers the right sort of man. Life in Portbury had added to the steel which five years' service with the Guards had given the Hon. Martin Dale. Again he smiled a trifle ironically. What did it matter? What did anything matter? He was sure of a jolly good game of football, anyway! But, deep down, he knew that his wearing the black-and-white striped jersey of Portbury that day had a deeper significance than his inherent love for the national game of England.

He had no further time for musing. The sharp, insistent blast of the referee's whistle calling the teams to battle hushed all noise. Rigid as statues, and as silent, the excitement-gripped crowd waited for the ball to be set in motion.

The sound thrilled the amateur outside left of Portbury. It was a call to action, and action was the thing he most ardently desired.

But action was slow in coming. Like the crowd, the Portbury team evidently mistrusted the new winger that had been thrust upon them. Dale was starved for the first fifteen minutes of the match.

This inactivity got on his nerves. He felt himself fretting. He was strung up to a dangerous pitch, and each minute increased his agitation. He paced the touch-line restlessly, acutely conscious of the indifference which was being shown him.

At last there was a shout. It held a derisive note. Turning, he saw the brown ball coming towards him out of the air. He waited, intending to trap it with his foot; but while he was waiting an opponent, jumping high into the air, jerked his head—and once again the visiting attack was set in motion.

A rumble went round the ground. Dale knew that it was directed at him. In his first chance he had failed; he had stood calmly by and allowed himself to be robbed of the ball. That was what it amounted to.

"*Amateurs!* I haven't any use for amateurs! They're afraid to take a risk!"

High above the mutterings of that section of the crowd near the winger rose the hoarse and contemptuous voice.

A laugh, acrid in its bitterness, followed. It caught the ears of the Swifts' right half-back—the man who had jumped agilely in the air to take that dropping ball—and with a frankly sneering stare at the outside left, he grinned. A very self-confident young man was that right half-back; yet, like many a better man, he was destined to learn his lesson.

Perhaps he himself knew least how it was done. But when the amateur next touched the ball, the outside left seemed to vanish into thin air. Certainly he was not in the place where the half-back had thought he would be. When, sprawling ludicrously in the mud, the Swifts' player heard a second laugh go up, he realized that this time it was directed against himself.

His astonishment as he rose was almost laughable. Yet it was shared by every spectator standing in that part of the ground. There had been footcraft in the masterly way the winger had got that awkward ball under instant control, and—impossible as it might seem—that dazzling swerve past the plunging half-back had

looked very much like wing work of the very highest class. Strange——

While the men whose eyes had been deceived by the quickness of the manœuvre were trying to puzzle out the riddle, a nerve-tingling cheer boomed out from the other side of the ground.

The scoffers looked again. They saw their despised outside left slip the Swifts' back as he had fooled his half.

"*Oh-h!*" The cry was almost a wail.

It seemed odds on the ball crossing the line and going out of play, but while it yet rested on that broad strip of whitewash, the winger hurled himself forward in a final spurt. A leg described an arc; there was the pleasant whang as boot met ball—and then the beautifully-timed centre floated right over the goal-mouth.

A miracle! And there was another to follow!

Mad at having been beaten, the right back of the Swifts kicked out recklessly as that danger-laden ball descended. Like a mischievous imp, it mocked him, curling off his foot to go over the line, a bare foot outside the upright.

Tense, but sure of himself now, Dale placed the ball in the tiny space by the corner-flag. That corner might have been kicked by a machine instead of by a man. There were power, direction, and judgment—especially judgment—behind the ball. The wind helped it instead of beating it: amid the hopes and prayers of the crowd it descended plomp into the goal-mouth.

Madness ensued. But it was a joyful madness. Presently the ruck of players cleared——

"*Goal!*"

The delirious cry was founded on fact. Someone wearing a black-and-white striped jersey had forced the ball past the Swifts' goalkeeper.

In that moment men could be seen muttering to themselves, crazed with joy. A triumphant, volleying yell rang round the ground, to be heard miles away. If Portbury won that match there was every chance of their defeating Fate and staying in the First Division—and they were one up!

GAMBOLLING like schoolboys, the Portbury players returned to the centre of the field. The inside right was being mobbed by his comrades. Alone in his citadel, the goal-keeper gave expression to his delight by turning convulsive somersaults.

Amid the tumult one member of the Portbury team walked alone. The outside left strolled leisurely back to take up his position on the centre-line. The winger gave the impression that he was quite self-contained, whereas he was actually twitching with the zest of the fray. Such a moment was almost worth the coming to Portbury as a Parliamentary candidate!

Suddenly, the congratulating players separated themselves. The home left back, the captain of the team, was seen to walk across the field. Where was he going?

A diffident smile on his face, he approached the amateur. His right hand was outstretched.

"Your goal, sir!" he said; "the boys want to thank you!"

The words—and the handshake which ensued—were not lost on those who heard them. Their knowledge of the game told them that if it had not actually been Dale's foot which had pushed the ball into the net, yet the left winger was morally responsible for the success.

"That's right, Charley!" they called to the left back. "Your goal—Mr. Dale!" They stumbled a little over the title, but there was sincerity in their voices.

IT was in this way that the crowd awakened to the worth of a man they had hitherto considered worthless. Their lead was followed by the visiting team. Two players amongst the Swifts vowed that this sort of thing should not occur again.

From now, the opposing right half-back dogged Dale's every footstep. Sault was a good half-back; he had his reputation as a likely International to maintain. He was resolved to do this even if he had to resort to various little devices which, if they escape the notice of the referee, are likely to be very effective.

Yet, all the shadiness of his jailer could not keep Dale in leash. The amateur had a hundred tricks, and he never played the same one twice. His elusiveness increased as the game wore on. For a man who was making his entry into serious First Division football his command over himself and the ball was astonishing.

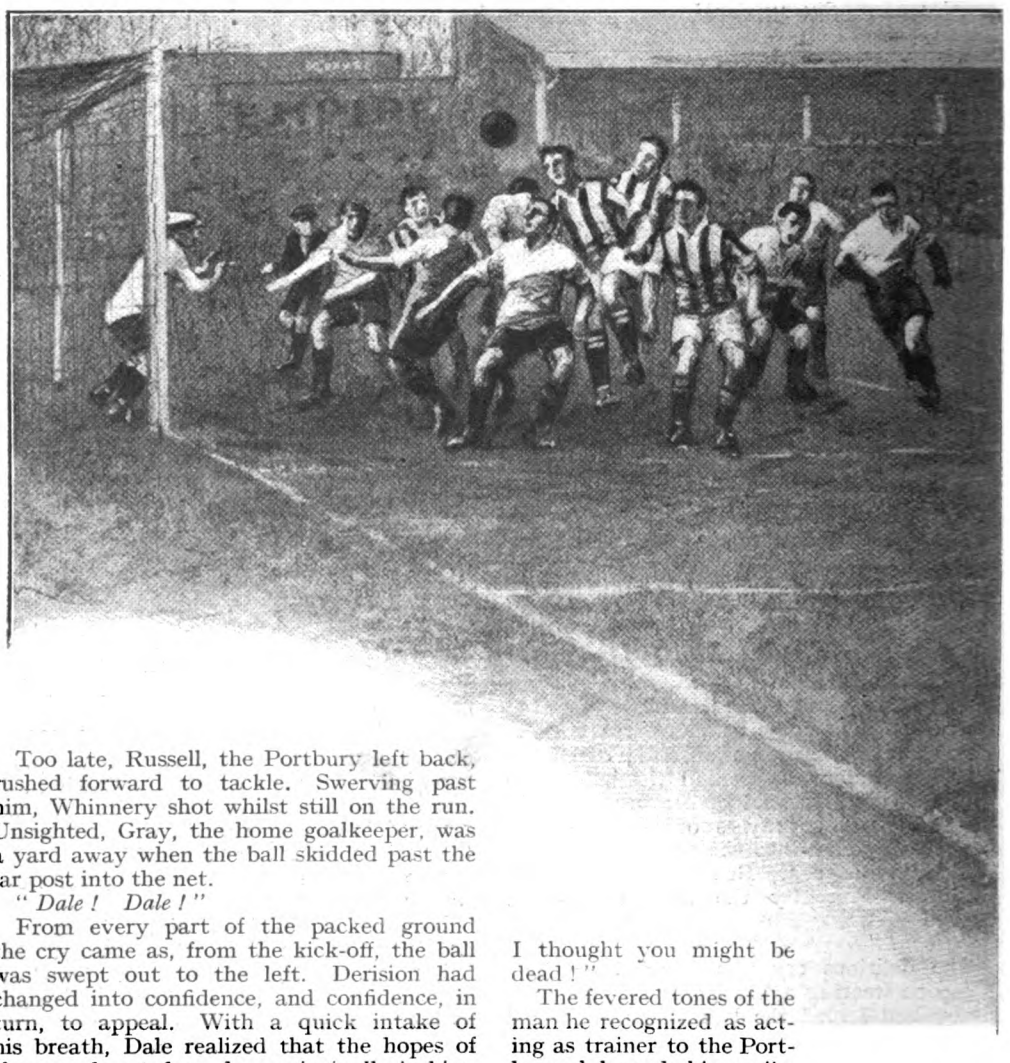
Neither Sault, the half, nor Bentley, the full-back, liked being perpetually foiled by this footballing will-o'-th'-wisp. During the short breathing-space of half-time they conferred together.

The precious minutes were fleeing. Only just over fifteen now remained for play.

On the heavy ground the relentless duel had resolved itself into which set of players were the better trained, more than anything else.

The home goal was hard pressed. Whinnery, the famous centre-forward of the Swifts, had seen three of his lightning drives flash by upright or over the crossbar. Now, the home crowd held its separate and collective breath as he seized on to a dropping centre.

The Hon. Member for Outside Left



Too late, Russell, the Portbury left back, rushed forward to tackle. Swerving past him, Whinnery shot whilst still on the run. Unsighted, Gray, the home goalkeeper, was a yard away when the ball skidded past the far post into the net.

"*Dale! Dale!*"

From every part of the packed ground the cry came as, from the kick-off, the ball was swept out to the left. Derision had changed into confidence, and confidence, in turn, to appeal. With a quick intake of his breath, Dale realized that the hopes of the crowd were bound up principally in him.

He jumped into his stride, his nerves on fire. He felt that only his excitement had allowed him to keep going so long, for, through lack of training, he was not in anything like the condition of the other men on the side.

The hoarse shouts of the men who were cheering him went to his head like wine; through a kind of mist he saw a man in a blue jersey leap at him. He remembered falling, feeling that all the life had been crushed out of him; and then everything went black.

Cold water, trickling from a sponge held over his face, brought him back to consciousness. He found himself lying flat on a bench just inside the railings that enclosed the playing-pitch.

"You're all right! Thank God for that! I thought you might be dead!"

The fevered tones of the man he recognized as acting as trainer to the Portbury club made him smile.

"No, I'm nothing like dead! But what happened? A mountain must have hit me! It felt like it, anyway!"

"That half and the right back sandwiched you! They've been 'layin'' for you all this half!" replied the trainer. "The devils 'ave shoved us down into the Second Division by knockin' you out! We haven't a chance now—not unless a miracle happens!"

"How much longer is there?" Dale snapped, sitting up.

"Five minutes! What—goin' on again! There ain't nothing wrong with your pluck, kid—I mean, sir!" added faithful old Josh Bickle, confusedly.

Dale slipped on to the field of play unobtrusively enough, but the crowd would not have it that way. They roared a welcome

"That corner might have been kicked by a machine instead of by a man—the ball descended plomp into the goal-mouth."

with throats of brass! "Five minutes!" they muttered, tensely, as watches were consulted; "if only——"

Tranter was dribbling the ball as the shout went up. Instinctively the centre-half guessed what had happened. Well, the fellow should have his chance——

Dale snapped up that perfectly-passed ball as a dog pounces on a bone. Before Sault, the opposing half-back, could decide what to do, this fleet-footed apparition that had noiselessly resumed his position on the field was past him—running like the wind!

The one prayer Dale made was that he

should not lose control of the ball. His legs felt strangely weak, and he feared that he would stumble before he could get a fair chance to accomplish the task he had set himself.

He sped on—straight for goal. If it could be managed he was going to do this thing himself—on his own. He swerved suddenly as a burly foe — whom by his heavy breathing he knew to be Bentley, the Swifts' right back — charged him viciously. Although he missed the full force of the impact, he reeled, almost lost his balance, and then, with the thunderous cheers throbbing in his ears, righted himself—and went on.

Before him he could see the white goal-posts. He could also see the left back cutting across the churned and slippery mud to bar his further progress. He knew that in this critical moment all would be lost if his nerve failed him for a second.

As straight as an arrow he raced forward, swaying his body as he ran. Fearless of the other's fierce tackle, he shot with all his power.

The next moment he was dragged up by main force from the pool of water into which he had slipped. The world had gone mad; men were pressing round him, eager to shake his hand, or, failing in that, to pat his shoulder. Frantic cheering, containing a savage exultancy, ran round the ground like a vibrant, living thing.

"Did I score?" Dale found himself asking.

"Score!" good-humouredly scoffed a voice; "you broke the net!"

The ridiculous too often follows the sublime. A comparatively short space of time after the Hon. Martin Dale had scored the winning goal which had saved Portbury from descent into the Second Division he found himself being remorselessly baited by residents of the town.

Sam Parkin, the third candidate in the Portbury field, who was trying to win the seat for Bolshevism on a ticket of "Nationalize everything!" had heard with the frankest alarm of the Blue candidate being carried off the football field that afternoon. He knew what a hold football had upon the average male voter. Decidedly, something must be done—and done quickly—to counteract this new "influence."

"'Some of you,' said the girl, 'have accused Mr. Dale of playing football from my father that that accusation

There were willing helpers. When Dale started to speak that evening he found that whilst many men cheered, the greater number jeered. Parkin's satellites had packed the meeting.

The chief objection to the candidate from the point of view of the interrupters seemed to be that he was the son of a peer. Nothing

could wipe out the stain of that unpardonable sin.

That fact gave the critics a starting-point as it were. But they did not confine themselves to the question of birth; at a rough estimate the candidate was charged with half the crimes the upper classes were supposed to have been responsible for during the last twenty years. At length Dale's patience gave out.

"Why don't you try to be sportsmen?" he asked.

A roar of rage answered him. A number of men darted forward with the obvious intention of rushing the platform. The position before had been merely stupid, farcical; now it looked dangerous. There was a threat of violence in the air.

"I s'pose you calls *yersel'* a sportsman, eh?" shouted a rasping voice; "tryin' to catch votes by playin' football——!"

The insinuation was so base, the suggestion so vile, that Dale would probably have flung himself at the man if his attention had not been arrested by a singular sight. He could scarcely believe his eyes at first; but, looking again, he found it was true enough, that first amazed impression of his: Standing up in her seat was a girl—and the girl was Phyllis Grayson!

His surprise was so great that he continued to stare—with an intensity that would have been unpardonable in any other circumstances. What was this girl, an avowed opponent, doing there? Had she come to gloat over his humiliation; over the obvious fact that he was being made a fool of?

"Oh——!"

The warning—uttered in a girl's voice—saved Dale from having his legs swept from under him by the groping hands. On his guard now, he waited until the first intruder clambered on to the platform—and then sent him reeling backwards with a right-handed punch that swung freely from the hip.

"Listen, please! I want to tell you all something about Mr. Dale!"

Again it was a girl's voice that rose above the din. Before the free fight which threatened could get under way men found themselves looking wonderingly in the direction of the speaker.

The Hon. Martin Dale looked with the rest. Surely the girl was not going to incite these brutes to further violence?

"Men, I will keep you but a few moments," the clear voice rang out, "but, as I said just now, I want to tell you something about the man you have just been abusing—Mr. Dale. Some of you have complained that he is not a sportsman—when everyone who has the interests of local sport at heart feel that they will never be able to repay him for what he has done for Portbury to-day!

just for the sake of trying to capture votes. I am authorized to tell you is a lie—and a foul lie at that!'"

"Some of you have accused him of playing football just for the sake of trying to capture votes. I am authorized to tell you from my father that that accusation is a lie—and a foul lie at that! If you will listen to me for just a few more seconds, I will tell you exactly what happened. Mr. Omerod, whom you all know as the chairman of directors of the Portbury Football Club, has just told me the facts.

"Every football follower in this room knows that, by what has seemed to us a miracle, the team we all support has been saved from relegation. The weakness of the left wing position has long been apparent; the want of a really first-class outside left has been a serious handicap all the season." The girl paused for a moment, and then lifted her face fearlessly, almost proudly. "To-day Portbury played the finest outside left that has ever worn the colours of the club! And that is the man you accuse of not being a sportsman!

"Wait! I have yet to tell you *why* the man who saved the club played to-day. You have accused him of playing in order to catch votes by means of a cheap popularity. That is an abominably false charge. Because he has always played football the Hon. Martin Dale has taken the keenest possible interest in the Portbury club ever since he arrived in the district. He did this out of a sheer love for the game; not because he had any reason to be grateful to the town for the way it had treated him. Knowing what success he had achieved as a player, the directors took him into their confidence; and when Lennie broke down in training they turned to him in sheer desperation and begged him to play himself in the game to-day—that all-important game which was to decide the future of the side!

"Now, listen: It was as a sportsman that they appealed to him—*and it was as a sportsman that he responded!* Sportsmen—real sportsmen—are always ready to take up a lost cause, and assuredly Portbury was a lost cause before the start of to-day's match!

"I"—the speaker's voice shook a little—"we all ought to be thankful to this gentleman for so splendidly 'playing the game' to-day! If you are men"—here the fine, sparkling eyes flashed round the room—"you will not only withdraw that disgraceful accusation, but——"

The girl was not able to complete her sentence, for a buzz of cheering burst out like a tumult that could no longer be repressed. Yet this was drowned by a clamant chorus which suddenly shook the building. From the windows a crowd of several thousand people could be seen marching. And as they marched they chanted with one voice:—

"*Dale! Dale! We want Dale! Dale! The man who gave 'em ——!*"

What remained of the malcontents drifted out of the school-room, cowed before that mighty chorus of crude but genuine affection.

A few strides brought the Hon. Martin Dale to the girl's side. Questions seemed superfluous, and yet he had to ask one.

"What made you do this splendid thing?" he said, in a voice that was unsteady. The lure of her made him clench his hands.

"I had treated you horribly—I had the wrong impression—besides, I had no right to criticize in any case—I wanted to be fair—to show you——!"

The staccato words, low and hushed as a nun's confession, were like harpstrings played by moonlight. Only Phyllis Grayson could have told you why she blushed as she said them.

The answer of the man standing by her side deepened the glowing bloom upon the rose-leaf cheeks.

"You are more than fair," said the Hon. Martin Dale, musingly; "you are very beautiful!"

Outside the cheers broke out afresh.

THE Hon. Martin Dale was returned for Portbury with an overwhelming majority. But it was as an Independent that he achieved this triumph. When the Blue officials, acting on the prompting of the irate Earl of Wronsborough—who placed professional football as a sport midway between pitch-and-toss and manslaughter—called for the Hon. Martin Dale's resignation, Sir Philip Grayson suddenly decided that he was too old for further politics, and "paired" with his prospective son-in-law.

"Dammee," he said, explosively, 'you aren't the only sportsman in Portbury! If your side turns you down, I'll turn myself down!" And sitting down forthwith he tendered his resignation to his party.

On the occasion of the Hon. Martin Dale making his maiden speech, a man in the Press Gallery with a *flair* for an attractive headline dubbed him "The Hon. Member for Outside Left!"

The name stuck.

The Last Laugh

by

RAYMOND A. COULSON

Illustrated by H. H. HARRIS

I HAVE never called Carter a liar. If a man chooses to tell impossible stories of his adventures, let him, say I. Give the man a sporting run and the meed of polite attention. I know Carter to be a good chap at heart, and his little idiosyncrasy never worries me. Lie and let lie is my motto.

But Pritchard is one of those dour, downright fellows, with a hard, Caledonian, literal habit of mind, and, one had fancied, no great sense of humour; and though the provocation was great, I think his method with Carter was not fair. It was almost like hitting below the belt, and I for one was delighted when at the end—— However, I had better relate what happened.

I had brought the two men together, and I wanted them to like each other, for they were both old friends of mine, and the world is not so full of good old friends you can afford to have them quarrelling among themselves. But from the first things went badly. Carter got going with one of his stories (we were drinking port, and that always makes him worse), and Pritchard took to leaning his forehead on his hand and regarding him searchingly, and interjecting "Oh?" in a sceptical, sarcastic tone, and "Strange!" and "And you say this happened to you?"

Carter revels in this sort of treatment. It just spurs him on. His tale got wilder and wilder, and after a quarter of an hour Pritchard's manner suddenly changed. He seemed to have made up his mind about Carter. He sat up and ordered drinks. "I'll call these," he said, "but I think the next will be on you."

"When I came to the surface," Carter was saying, "I found myself absolutely alone in that waste of waters. Not a man save myself, and, it seemed, not a vestige remained of the whaler *Lady Kate*."

"I don't remember the loss of the *Lady Kate*," said Pritchard. "But then," he added, affably, "of course I don't keep track of all the shipping disasters."

"It was five years ago," said Carter. "But my first impression that not a vestige remained was wrong. I had just time to take one great breath, when over the top of a wave came floating this harpoon-chest I've mentioned that had been lying on the deck. It came so close that I was able to put my hand on it. You must remember that it was the only thing that had come up, except myself. Now, the remarkable thing is I can't swim a yard. If I had come up anywhere else on that sea, or it had been anywhere else, I should most certainly have been helpless. It was a marvellous bit of luck."

"I don't think it at all remarkable," said Pritchard. "The thing had to be somewhere, and it might just as well have been where you were as anywhere else. Indeed, the natural forces that brought you there must have brought the chest to the same spot too. The thing was inevitable."

"Well, anyhow," said Carter, a little resentfully, "I was jolly thankful, and very surprised too."

"I expect you hadn't had time then to think it out," said Pritchard.

"Well, I climbed on to the top of the chest," said Carter, hurriedly. "Fortunately, it was floating right way up, and the water could not get in round the edges of the lid and sink it. It was a good stout oak chest,

about six feet long and five broad, and, I found out later, did not let any water in at the joints. But the situation seemed pretty desperate. This great tidal wave I've told you about had carried the whaler hundreds of miles away from all known shipping tracks, and there I was in the middle of one of the most desolate parts of the South Pacific, without food, or water, or anything!"

"But I should think you are used to that kind of thing," said Pritchard.

"It's the kind of thing you don't get used to—— Well, while I was thinking it over, there came a great commotion in the water, and to my horror I saw leering up at me an enormous shark—a really enormous one, by far the largest I've ever seen; and I've seen some pretty big ones. It leered at me, and seemed to smile—of course, that could only have been my imagination—and slowly turned till it was stern forward to me and the chest. In a flash I realized its plan. It meant to sweep me off the top of the chest with its tail into the sea, where it would be able to devour me at its leisure."

"I KNOW," Pritchard interjected, sympathetically. "I've read about one in New Zealand that goes out to meet all the ships, and can recognize old friends. It's quite a well-known shark."

"I'm telling you about this shark," said Carter, irritably. "I watched him narrowly, and as I saw his tail flash out of the water, I leapt vertically into the air. His tail swept over the top of the chest, missed me, of course, and down I came back on the lid. The shark seemed surprised, but repeated the manœuvre. I am good at skipping—when I'm at home I skip ten minutes every morning before breakfast; it's the best form of exercise—and I was prepared to keep this up as long as the shark liked. So for some time we went on like that, the shark lashing away with his tail, and me jumping just as his tail passed over the chest. Keeping your eye on the tail, and correct timing—that was all it needed. After a bit the shark got tired, and lay off a while, thinking. Then he charged at me head first. His new plan was to knock me off with his snout. I knew that however high I jumped he would be able to snap some part of me as I came down, so just as he hit the chest I leapt backward into the sea. His momentum carried his nose up on to the lid, and brought the edge with an awful jar against my ribs. He seemed a bit puzzled at not finding me, till he saw me in the sea, hanging on to the other side of the chest. At once he turned and began to swim round. Being so large, he was a bit unwieldy, and by the time he had turned and got round, I, watching my moment, had nipped up on to the chest and into the sea on the other side again. He started round once more, but when he got there I was again in the sea on the other side, and there was still the chest between the two of us.

"And so it went on. I was afraid he might dive under. I think I should still have been a bit too quick for him, but anyhow, he never thought of that. It was quite bad enough. I had had a pretty exhausting day, what with one thing and another, and after a bit this continual popping up on to the chest and in and out of the water began to tell on me. The lid of the chest was an ordinary hinged one, fastening with a hasp and staple. Choosing my chance while he was on the hinge side and I was on the hasp side, I lifted the lid, nipped inside the box, and had the lid slammed down before he got round. He was thoroughly infuriated by this time, and began to bang violently on the box. There was some cross-strapping on the inside of the lid, where they had kept the grease-pot, so I was able to hold the lid down firmly. But there I was, lying on the harpoons and rope, and feeling the jar right through my body every time the enraged shark battered on the outside of the box. I have rarely been in a more extraordinary situation."

"Not at all," said Pritchard. "If the shark had worked the edge of his fin in under the lid and tried to prise it up to get at you I should have thought there was something strange in that. But just bang about on the outside of the box—that's naturally what any ordinary shark would do."

"Well, you may think it ordinary," said Carter, bitterly. "I did not, and I felt very anxious indeed. I wondered how long the chest could stand the strain. At first the shark merely battered in a brutal, stupid sort of way, but presently he took to retiring a short distance, then turning and coming back with a rush, by which means he acquired an appalling momentum. I could tell this by the swish as he turned and made off, the short interval of peace and quiet, and then the dreadful crash as he struck the chest once more. I realized that the chest could not stand much of this, so after the fourth or fifth crash I seized one of the harpoons, chose the time when I judged he would be at his maximum distance before charging, popped out of the chest on top of the lid, and——"

"Yes, yes, I know. You harpooned him," interrupted Pritchard. "Go on. I'm interested in your story, but do cut out the dull bits."

"I never saw a shark surprised so much in all my life before," Carter continued. "It went off at a great pace, but, luckily,

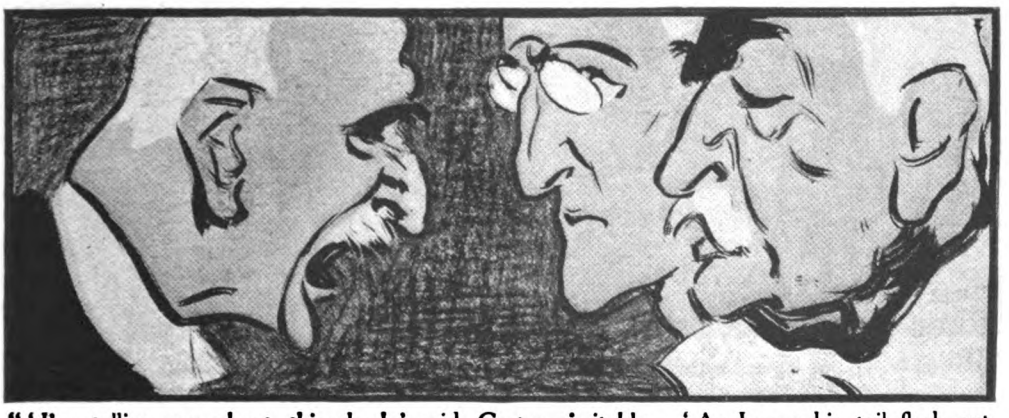
before it had got too far I managed to make the rope on the harpoon fast to the staple on the lid. Because, of course, while I did not want the shark too close, I could not afford to part with him altogether. He tried to dive, but the buoyancy of the chest soon pulled him to the surface again, and along we went, tearing through the water at a terrible pace. The trouble was I had no proper control over the shark. The harpoon was embedded in his shoulder just to the right of the backbone, and I noticed that whenever I jerked at the rope the shark curled his tail spasmodically over to the right, though whether this was some automatic or reflex muscular reaction, or just an effort to remove the irritation, as you will see horses switch at flies with their tails, I could not make out.

"Anyhow, the effect of the tail being curled round was, of course, to steer the shark to the right. But that merely kept us going round in circles, and I realized that my only chance was to drive ahead in a straight line on the off-chance of finding land somewhere. So I selected a second harpoon and awaited my opportunity. In order to produce the required effect and enable me to steer the shark right or left as I chose, I had to find the exact corresponding spot in the muscles to the left of his backbone. It was a very difficult cast. The chance was a hundred to one against, but I had to take it. Breathing a brief prayer I hurled the harpoon with all my force, and to my delight saw it plunge exactly in the right spot. It was a miraculous bit of luck."

"Nonsense!" said Pritchard. "Of course, you had to do it. Why, man, your very life depended on it!"

"That's what I said," Carter snapped. He paused and looked Pritchard up and down, seemed to choke for a moment, and doggedly resumed his narrative. "I was now able to keep the shark going in a straight line by jerking one or the other of the ropes and causing his tail to twist whenever he tried to deviate. The rage to which he had been worked up by this time, and the irritation caused by the two harpoons, sent him along at a tremendous rate. It was like being in a fast motor-boat, except that the chest was not so comfortable.

"I steered by the sun, and when that went down by the stars, keeping straight on because I knew that offered the best chance of finding land. And, sure enough, towards noon the next day I sighted a



"'I'm telling you about this shark,' said Carter, irritably. 'As I saw his tail flash out of the water, I leapt into the air.'"

hilltop on the horizon, and an hour later had run the shark ashore on one of the most beautiful islands the eye of man ever beheld. The remarkable combination of circumstances—the chest, the shark, my lucky shots with the harpoons—make it, to my mind, one of the most singular escapes on record."

"Oh, do you think so?" said Pritchard. "Why, you say it was the season of calms, so you couldn't expect a wind. You were right off the shipping track, so a vessel to pick you up was in the highest degree improbable. Hang it, something of that sort was simply bound to happen, or you wouldn't be here now."

"From observations I worked out later," muttered Carter, gritting his teeth, "I found that the shark had carried me a distance of just on a thousand miles in rather less than twenty-four hours."

"Jolly lucky you were, too!" said Pritchard. "In a great waste ocean like the South Pacific I shouldn't have been a bit surprised if you'd had to go two thousand before you found an island."

"Waiter!" said Carter, desperately, "Three ports, please." He gulped his wine and seemed to pluck up a bit. "The people of the island worshipped me as a god," he announced with defiance.

"Naturally! Here we have a simple, unsophisticated people see a man come tearing over the sea at fifty miles an hour, driving a shark like a hansom-cab horse between reins. Naturally, they worship him as a god. It's inevitable, in the circumstances."

"Their customs were almost incredibly weird and strange."

"I suppose so. A people cut off from all the rest of mankind in the middle of a vast ocean—it would be something remarkable if their customs were not weird and strange."

"Well, I won't tell you about their customs, then," said Carter. "They were cannibals of the most ferocious kind."

"Of course."

"'I was now able to keep the shark going in a straight line by jerking one or the other of

"Why 'Of course'?"

"Oh," said Pritchard, fluently, "it's a well-known fact that the climate of the South Pacific produces a peculiar craving for meat, and the larger mammalia being absent, the people have to fall back on human flesh."

"On this island," said Carter, viciously, "there were lions, tigers, buffaloes, sheep, pigs, panthers, goats, elephants, giraffes, and a great many other mammals all of the largest kinds."

"Oh!" Pritchard gasped for a moment. "Ah!" He sipped his wine thoughtfully.

Then, "I see," he said; "it was one of the other sort of island. Not the kind that are being built out of the sea by the coral, but the other kind that are slowly subsiding into the sea. In such circumstances, with the fauna from a large—possibly a continental—area concentrated into one small island, of course you would have a lot of large animals all jammed up pretty close together. It's only natural."

"Waiter," said Carter, in a dreary voice, "bring three more ports." He closed his eyes and lay back. Then suddenly he sat up and glared at Pritchard. "Anyhow," he said, briskly, "it was this cannibalism that made me unpopular with the people. Of course, I tried to put it down, being a humane man, and that brought me the enmity of the priests. They arranged that one day as I sat down a spear should by an apparent accident scratch my arm. Blood began to pour from the wound. 'Ah!' they all screamed. 'Not a god! Not a god, but good to eat!' I realized at once that I was in deadly peril, and fled. I dashed out of my State Temple with a short lead, and made for the hills, the whole mob yelling and howling after me. Madly I toiled up the steep slope, the furious savages gaining on me all the time. My lungs began to crack, my heart seemed to burst under the strain. The limit of human endurance was reached—was passed. I fell down dead." He stopped.

Pritchard's jaw dropped. "Eh?" he said, blankly. "You mean—you mean, in a dead faint?"

"No. Dead," Carter repeated, firmly. "I fell down dead. I was boiled and eaten two days later."

Pritchard was silent for some moments. Then he called to the waiter. "Bring a *bottle* of port," he said.

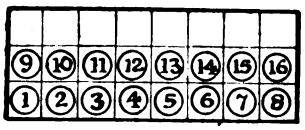
He turned to me, and for the first time that evening a smile dawned in his eyes and spread slowly all over his large face. "I like your friend Carter," he said.

the ropes, and the irritation caused by the two harpoons sent him along at a tremendous rate."

PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

545.—COUNTER SOLITAIRE.

THIS simplification of the board of the old game of Solitaire lends itself to many entertaining little pastimes of patience. Copy the simple diagram on a sheet of paper or cardboard and use sixteen counters, numbered and placed as shown. The puzzle is to remove all but one counter by a succession of leaps. A counter can leap over another adjoining it to the next square beyond, if vacant, and in making the leap you remove the one jumped over. But no leap can be made in a diagonal direction. The following is a solution in eight moves: 5—13, (6—14 6—5), 16—15, (3—11, 3—6), 2—10, (8—7, 8—16, 8—3), (1—9, 1—2, 1—8), (4—12, 4—1). This means that 5 leaps over 13 and 13 is removed, 6 then leaps over 14 and 14 is removed, and so on. The leaps within a bracket count as one move, because the leaps are made with the same counter in succession. It will be seen that No. 4 makes the last leap. Now try to find a solution, also in eight moves, in which No. 1 makes the last leap.



546.—THE "ARK" RECONSTRUCTED.

I HAVE received from Mr. A. Parkin the following ingenious new version of the Enigma (our No. 524) respecting Noah's Ark:—

In Noah's time, when from the Ark
Came animals in pairs,
Who was it then would suffer most
From trampling on the stairs?

The answer to this version is quite different, and, I consider, superior.

547.—WORD ENDINGS.

HOW many different ways are there of spelling the final syllable sounded like "tion" in "position," in English words? We cannot include the forms 'musician," "ocean," "Galatian," or "Russian," as these end in "shan" or "she-an," and not in "shun." There are more ways than you may suspect.

548.—PLAYING FOR MARBLES.

TOM and Fred started playing marbles when each held the same number. Tom won twenty in the first game, but in the second game he lost two-thirds of what he held. This left Fred with four times as many marbles as Tom. How many had each boy at the start of play?

549.—THE TUBE STAIRS.

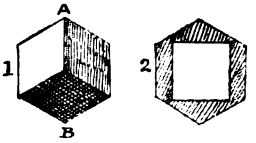
I RAN up against Percy Longman, a young athlete, the other day when leaving Curley Street tube station. He stopped at the lift, saying, "I always go up by the stairs. A bit of exercise, you know. But this is the longest stairway on the line, nearly a thousand steps. I will tell you a queer thing about it that only applies to one other smaller stairway on the line. If I go up two steps at a time, there is one step left for the last bound: if I go up three at a time, there are two steps left; if I go four at a time, there are three left; five at a time, four are left; six at a time, five are left; and if I went up seven at a time, there would be six risers left over for the last bound. Now, why is that?"

As he went flying up the stairs, three steps at a time, I laughed and said to myself, "He little suspects that if he went up twenty steps at a time there would be nineteen risers for his last bound!" How many risers are there in the Curley Street tube stairway? The platform does not count as a riser, and the top landing does.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

540.—A CUBE PARADOX.

IT is a curious fact that a cube can be passed through another cube of smaller dimensions. Suppose a cube to be raised so that its diagonal A B is perpendicular to the plane on which it rests, as in Figure 1. Then the resulting projection will be a regular hexagon, as shown. In Figure 2 the square hole is cut for the passage of a cube of the same dimensions. But it will be seen that there is room for cutting a hole that would pass a cube of even larger dimensions. Therefore the one through which I cut a hole was not, as the reader may have hastily supposed, the larger one, but the smaller! Consequently, the larger cube would obviously remain the heavier. This could not happen if the smaller were passed through the larger.



541.—FACTORY HANDS.

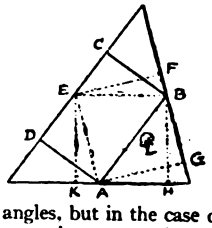
THE factors of 570 (2 x 285) are 2, 3, 5, and 19. All possible divisors not exceeding 19 are given in the first column below, where the numbers in the other columns are obtained in this way. Take the first two cases. 570 divided by 19 is 30. A half of (30 – 19 + 1) is 6, and 6 + 19 – 1 is 24. Again, 570 divided by 15 is 38. A half of (38 – 15 + 1) is 12, and 12 + 15 – 1 is 26.

19	men	aged	6	to	24
15	,,	,,	12	,,	26
10	,,	,,	24	,,	33
6	,,	,,	45	,,	50
5	,,	,,	55	,,	59
3	,,	,,	94	,,	96
2	,,	,,	142	,,	143
1	man	,,	285	,,	285

The first three lines alone fulfil the condition as to the ratio of the three ages, so the answer is 19, 15, and 10.

542.—THE GARDEN BED.

BISECT the three sides in A, B, and E. If you join A B and drop the perpendiculars A D and B C, then A B C D will be the largest possible rectangle and exactly half the area of the triangle. The two other solutions, F E A G and K E B H, would also serve (all these rectangles being of the same area) except for the fact that they would enclose the tree. This applies to any triangle with acute angles, but in the case of a right-angled triangle there are only two equal ways of proceeding.



543.—AN UNSOLVED ENIGMA.

THIS for the present remains unsolved.

544.—REVERSING THE DIGITS.

IF we multiply 9 8 9 0 1 0 9 8 9 by 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 we get 1 2 2 1 0 0 1 2 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1, with the last nine digits in reverse order.

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To face end of Text.

Miss Gladys Cooper Explains Some Beauty Secrets.

The Popular London Star Favours Simple Methods.

I have been asked to give a few simple recipes that I know, either through personal use or by observation, to be valuable to the toilet, and which are within the reach of the average woman. In these days of £100 facial treatments and elaborate and expensive beautifying processes my suggestions may read like lessons in economy, but they are not especially so intended. They are merely practical suggestions, in which the keynote is "effectiveness." All the materials or ingredients which I mention are either already at hand in the home or may be readily procured from the chemist. Fortunately I do not suffer from the ailments or troubles enumerated below, but some people who are not so fortunate have told me their experiences, and with your permission I will set forth some remedies which they have found to be efficacious.

Home Made Hair Tonic.

My acquaintances say that a good stimulant to the natural growth of the hair is a very simple, effective, and safe stimulating lotion made up by mixing one ounce of boranium with ½ pint of bay rum. This may be applied to the hair roots occasionally with the finger tips with good results.

Complexion Renewals.

Complexion experts advise me that a normal, healthy complexion is constantly renewing itself by dropping off in tiny flakes of worn-out tissue, thus revealing the fresh young skin underneath. They say that when this process is checked by age, exposure, or some of many causes, the complexion becomes dull and ugly. The rational treatment recommended is to help the skin perform its natural functions of "shedding" worn-out tissue. For this purpose, I am informed, there is nothing so good as pure mercolized wax, used for a few nights, just as you would use a face cream. It is claimed that it possesses a special affinity for the effete scarf-skin, which it quickly removes by absorbing it. The face, I am assured, will soon look much younger and prettier under this treatment.

Removing Superfluous Hair.

I have been told of some most remarkable experiments in removing superfluous hair, roots and all, with what is said to be a perfectly harmless substance known as phelactine. It is claimed for this preparation that it is not a depilatory, and therefore does not burn or injure the skin. With a candle flame it is first melted to a syrup-like consistency, and while still warm is smeared on the skin over the superfluous hair. Although it is removed almost immediately the effect is supposed to paralyse and loosen the hair roots, for when it is removed the hair should come right off with it and the roots themselves. I am told that in many cases the growth never reappears, and that even if it does so it returns only after a very long time and in so much weaker form that it is easy to cope with by means of a repeated application of phelactine. I understand that the method is becoming so well known that many chemists are now supplying phelactine in specially prepared packages containing full instructions for home use.

MISS GLADYS COOPER.

Photo] [Wrather & Buys.

Is Powder Necessary?

A great many women object to using powder, for various reasons. The following formula is a good one: Dissolve an ounce of cleminite in four tablespoonfuls of water, or witch-hazel, and use it as a face lotion, smoothing the skin with the fingers until it is dry. This method is perfectly harmless. I am told that a really beautiful, natural, velvety bloom results and remains for many hours quite unaffected by the most trying conditions out of doors or in the ballroom or theatre, and that it gives a much more natural appearance to some skins than does ordinary powder.

The Curling Iron.

Don't use a hot iron to curl your hair. Some of my friends make the cunningest sort of curls wherever they want them simply by dampening the hair with liquid silmerine before retiring at night. When the hair is dry in the morning it will be softly curly just where you want it to be. This method is perfectly harmless, even beneficial to the hair, and the curls last a long time. The liquid is quite pleasant and neither sticky nor greasy.

How to Shampoo.

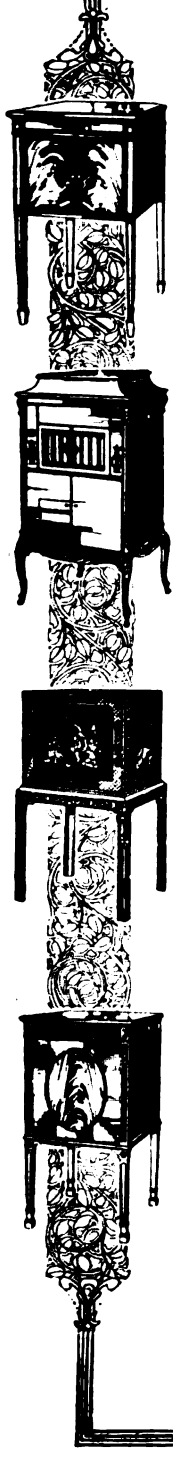
Most women, I am informed, do not know how to use stallax properly when shampooing with it. Unless the hair is naturally very oily, a stallax shampoo may sometimes leave it rather dry. But I am told if you will apply olive oil freely to your hair and scalp just before shampooing with stallax the result is most delightful. The hair will be left clean, soft, bright, and wavy, the olive oil having properly balanced the action of this wonderful hair cleanser.

Care of the Hands.

An excellent method of putting the hands in fine condition and keeping them so is to rub them with bicrolium jelly just before retiring at night. This quickly takes away roughness, redness, tan, &c., and makes them soft, white and smooth. After this has been done, an occasional application will keep them in proper form.

Gladys Cooper

NOTE.—This interesting article on beauty culture in general was written by Miss Gladys Cooper at the request of the manufacturers of Pilenta Soap—the best complexion soap in the world. On sale at all chemists.—[ADVT.]



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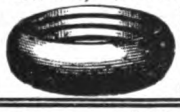

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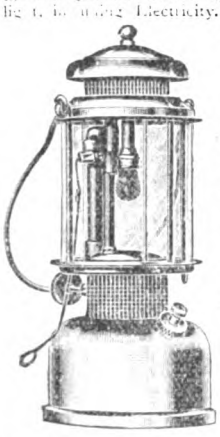

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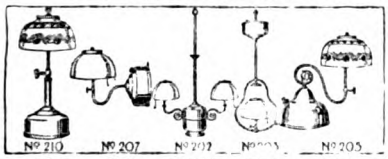

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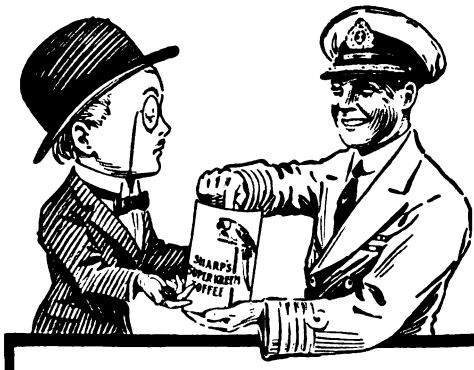

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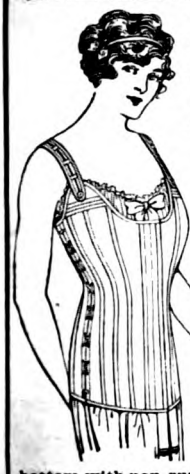

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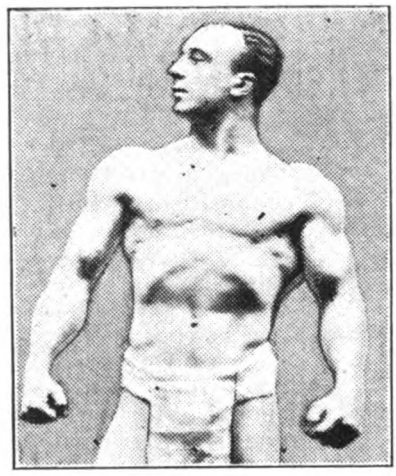

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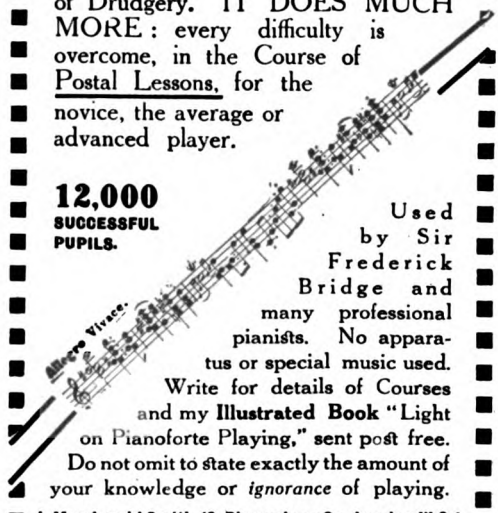

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NEURASTHENIA
(NERVE WEAKNESS)
CURED BY ELECTRICITY.

To-day the conditions of life are causing a serious increase in Neurasthenia and other Nervous and Functional Disorders.

The symptoms of Neurasthenia are many and varied. They are mainly mental or nervous, and often the victim is quite unaware of the fact that he or she is travelling rapidly towards Nervous Exhaustion and Nervous Prostration.

ARE YOU NERVOUS LIKE THIS?

IF SO, CURATIVE ELECTRICITY WILL PUT YOU RIGHT.

The Pulvermacher Appliances are the only inventions for the administration of curative electricity, endorsed by over fifty leading Doctors and by the official Academy of Medicine in Paris.

HAVE YOU ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS?

Are you Nervous, Timid, or Indecisive?
Do you lack Self-Confidence?
Do you dread open or closed spaces?
Are you wanting in Will Power?
Are you "fidgety," restless, or sleepless?
Do you blush or turn pale readily?
Do you shrink from strange company?
Are you subject to sudden impulses?
Do you crave for stimulants or drugs?

If so, you can safely assume that you are suffering from Neurasthenia. The neurasthenic also often suffer from **Indigestion, Liver Troubles, Constipation, Palpitation, Loss of Appetite, Excess of Appetite,** and a host of other disorders due to faulty functioning of various organs. Electricity is the only force that naturally supplies this deficiency of Nerve Force, and restores tone to the whole nervous system, To-day you can be

CURED IN YOUR OWN HOME BY ELECTRICITY

by simply wearing the Pulvermacher Appliances, which are light, easy, and comfortable to wear. They give no shock, but all the time they are being worn they supply the nerve centres with a continuous flow of electricity, naturally stimulate the circulation of the blood, and increase nerve nutrition.

This is the natural and physiological treatment of Neurasthenia, which drug treatments can never cure. The Pulvermacher Treatment has cured the most obstinate cases of Neurasthenia and Nervous Disorders when all other methods have failed. If you are suffering from any form of Nerve Trouble, or if you have any of the symptoms as described above, write to-day for a book that may well prove of incalculable health value to you, yet it costs you nothing. It is entitled "Guide to Health and Strength," and will be sent post free. **Those who can call personally are cordially invited to do so, when a consultation on their health trouble may be secured absolutely free of charge** and without obligation between the hours of 10 and 5.30 daily.

FREE COUPON

By posting this **FREE FORM TO-DAY** you will receive the **"Guide to Health and Strength."** You place yourself under no obligation by applying for this book and particulars of the Pulvermacher Appliances.

Name.....

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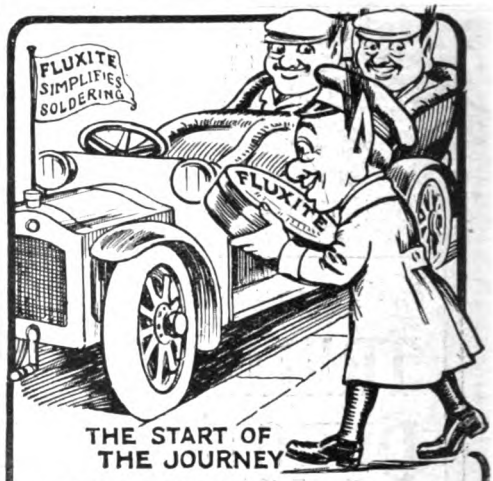
Post to the Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute Ltd., 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.
Strand Magazine, April, 1921.



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A POINT TO BE REMEMBERED.

Before starting out on your journey make certain that you have your Fluxite with you. Those little breakdowns, which can easily be repaired in a few minutes by soldering with Fluxite, might otherwise cost you money and valuable hours of your time. There are thousands of other jobs, whether it be the Car, leaking pipes, household utensils, gardening tools, etc., where Fluxite can save you pounds.

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Ask your Ironmonger or Hardware Dealer to show you the neat little Fluxite Soldering Set. It is perfectly simple to use, and will last for years in constant use. All Hardware and Ironmongery Stores sell Fluxite in tins, price **8**d., **1/4** & **2/8**. *BUY A TIN TO-DAY.*

THE "FLUXITE" SOLDERING SET contains a special "small-space" Soldering Iron with non-heating metal handle, a Pocket Blow-Lamp, Fluxite, Solder, etc., and full instructions. Price **10/6**, Sample Set, post paid United Kingdom.
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Lady "Di" says Twink adds Joy to the Jumper-

THERE is a new pleasure in wearing jumpers and other garments when they have been through a Twink bath. They take on a new charm and freshness. Twink adds joy to your personal wear—keeps your garments dainty.

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· PRIZE ·
COMPETITION
See Pages 6 & 7

New Adventures of
THE FOUR JUST MEN
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CHOCOLAT
SUPRÊME
A
Gift
Showing
Discernment
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Contributions by
A. CONAN DOYLE
PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM
P. G. WODEHOUSE
and
TETRAZZINI'S
REMINISCENCES

May,
1921.

— A —
GOOD TURN
When you
have read
this copy
pass it on
to a friend.

No. 365
VOL 61

1/- net.

Milk breads of *cream* richness

Have you ever tried making bread with cream?

Probably not, for that—to any housewife—would seem the height of extravagance. And yet it is true that rich cream has the same mellowing effect upon bread that it has on cake or pudding. It gives a delicate flavour and a fine texture that nothing else can give.

Why not use for your breads a milk that is rich like cream? You can get a milk as rich as this—and it comes at a price which makes its use, even for bread making, seem quite economical.

Libby's Evaporated Milk is this cream-rich milk. It is pure milk from the finest dairy districts of the country, evaporated to twice its original richness.

Try the bread recipes on this page, and you will be satisfied that even bread can be improved by this pure, rich milk.

With a nice loaf of fancy bread in the house you will ask friends to stay for tea. The sandwiches are soon ready—your brown and white bread, spread with cheese and laid in alternate layers, make an attractive and popular dish. If you prefer to serve coffee, the little cinnamon rolls can be buttered and served just as they are. Libby's Milk will make all your bread crisp, brown and tender.

Sweet French Rolls.

½ cup Libby's Milk
½ cup water
1 yeast cake dissolved in ¼ cup lukewarm water
Flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 egg
4 tablespoons butter (or margarine)
1 teaspoon cinnamon
4 tablespoons sugar

Scald Libby's Milk and water; when lukewarm add dissolved yeast and 1½ cups of flour; mix well and let rise. Cut down, add sugar, salt, egg well beaten, cinnamon and butter; add enough flour to knead. Let rise again, roll in a long strip, one-fourth inch thick, spread with butter; roll as a jelly roll and cut in one-inch pieces. Place in pan close together. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Let rise, bake in a hot oven.

Nut Bread.

4 cups flour
6 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
½ cup water
1 cup walnuts
¾ cup Libby's Milk
2 eggs
1 cup sugar

Mix dry ingredients and nuts. Add milk and well-beaten eggs. Put in two greased pans and let stand twenty minutes. Bake one-half hour.

Baked Brown Bread.

½ cup treacle
1 tablespoon melted butter (or margarine)
½ cup raisins
4 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon carbonate soda
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups wholemeal flour
½ cup white flour
½ cup Libby's Milk
½ cup water

Mix and sift dry ingredients, add raisins, milk, treacle and the melted butter. Put in a greased pan, let stand twenty minutes. Bake forty-five minutes in a slow oven.

Ribbon Sandwiches.

1 loaf white bread
1 loaf brown bread
Butter or margarine
Libby's Milk

Slice bread very thin. Make three layer sandwiches; two slices of brown and one slice of white bread, or two slices of white bread and one slice brown bread. Spread with butter which has been softened with Libby's Milk. Slice through layer sandwiches cross-wise, in one-half-inch slices.

Let your Grocer be your Milkman.

Write for our free booklet, "Finer Flavoured Milk Dishes." It is full of recipes for delicious cream and butter-saving dishes that will please the whole family.

Libby, McNeill & Libby, Ltd.

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The ENO Bottle and Package

Britons are a scattered race. In the pursuit of knowledge, in the quest for wealth, or for sheer glory of achievement—they have penetrated the furthermost parts of the earth. But no place is so remote that ENO does not reach it—and so it happens that, be they beneath Southern skies or Northern lights, Britons the world over unite in the healthful practice of taking ENO before breakfast.

As a cool and refreshing drink—as a promoter of mental and physical energy—as a safeguard against many of the ills attributable to climatic conditions—as a corrective of irregular functioning of the system due to the uncertain conditions of travel—ENO has no equal.

Through fifty years its reputation has spread from Pole to Pole, and Scientists, Explorers, Engineers, Travellers, Missionaries, and Medical Men testify to its remarkable efficacy.

They drink Health who drink

ENO's FRUIT SALT

The ENO Symbol of Happiness

The cause of such irregularities as indigestion, loss of appetite, biliousness, headache, lassitude and depression is removed in a perfectly natural manner by the daily use of ENO. This pleasant safeguard to health is pure, palatable, simple and effective. Always keep a bottle handy.

ENO is sold by Chemists and Stores throughout the world. The words "ENO" and "Fruit Salt" are the registered Trade Marks of J. C. ENO, LTD., "Fruit Salt" Works, London, S.E.

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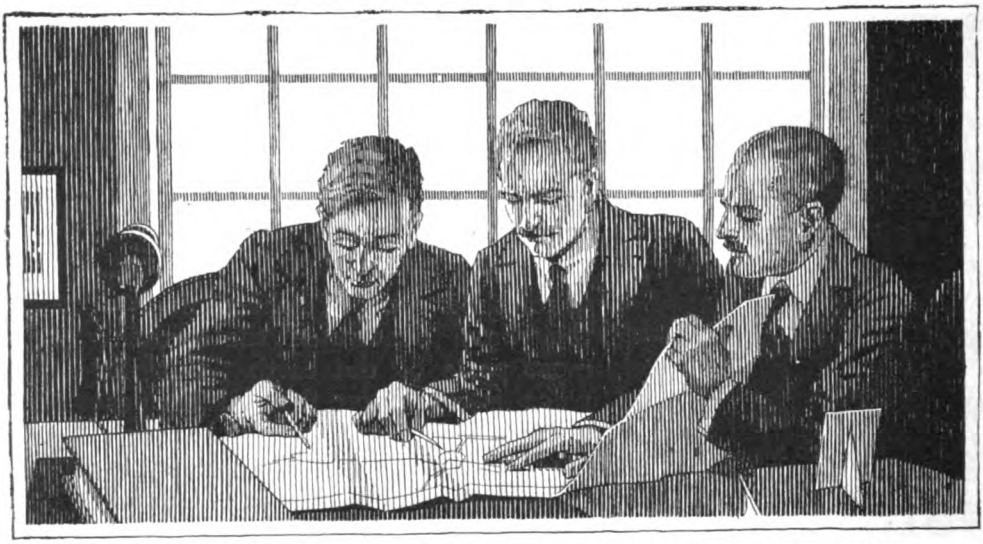


Three big men in business. The Secretary, the Accountant, and the Manager. Concentrate on qualifying yourself to fill one of these posts and the School of Accountancy will train you until you succeed

—until you succeed!

"Yes," you say, "but how long will it take me to succeed, and how much will it cost me if the training is spread over a long period?"

Our answer to this is that most of our students qualify for the positions they set out to attain in 6 to 12 months, but if for any reason a student fails to qualify in this period, or fails to pass a professional examination for which we have trained him to sit, the training is continued free of charge until he does succeed.

"But is it within the power of EVERY man to qualify for an executive position?"

No, but we do not undertake to train *every* man who applies to us for enrolment. If preliminary correspondence leads us to believe that a man is not sufficiently intelligent to benefit by the tuition we offer we frankly tell him so and do not enrol him or accept any fee.

Convincing facts about School of Accountancy Training

A "Questionnaire" was sent out to a number of the School's Students asking for definite answers to the following three questions:—

(a) *What was your Business Position at date of your enrolment as a Student?*

(b) *What is your Business Position to-day?*

(c) *To what extent annually has your salary or profits increased since the date you enrolled as a Student of the School?*

The information obtained revealed an unbroken list of really fine successes, ranging from

200-800% increases in Salary achieved within twelve months of enrolment

Read for yourself a few of the answers received.

1.
(a) Commercial Correspondent.
(b) Secretary of Limited Company.
(c) Considerably over 700% increase.

2.
(a) Junior Clerk to Chartered Accountant.
(b) Chartered Accountant.
(c) 800% increase.

3.
(a) Employee at £150.
(b) Accountant at £450.
(c) £300 per annum increase.

4.
(a) Commercial Correspondent.
(b) Secretary of Limited Company.
(c) Considerably over 700% per annum increase.

5.
(a) Insurance agent.
(b) Accountant A.L.L.A.
(c) 225% per annum increase.

6.
(a) A commissioned officer in H.M. Army with no business experience.
(b) Professional Public Accountant.
(c) Estimate £400 per annum increase.

Above are actual copies of some of the answers made out on the "Questionnaires" returned by our students. The originals have been examined by David Paterson, Chartered Accountant, 138, Bath Street, Glasgow, who certifies that these copies are genuine.

The whole testimony affords conclusive evidence, in face of which no man can possibly remain unconvinced of the enormous advantage and value of School of Accountancy Training.

Why not raise yourself to a Professional status?

Twelve out of the first sixteen places in the December Examinations of the London Association of Accountants were secured by School of Accountancy students, who during the past six years have secured nearly all the First Places and Prizes. At the Chartered Institute of Secretaries Examinations our showing is 100 per cent. passes in twenty of twenty-two examinations. Achievements at the Examinations of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and Society of Incorporated Accountants are equally remarkable.

In all commercial examinations our record is one long string of First Places, Medals, Prizes, and Distinctions.

This Valuable Business Guide——FREE

It contains useful information about business and business training, gives particulars of all our Courses and Terms, and includes facts which will convince you that our training will qualify you to fill a responsible executive position. WRITE FOR A COPY TO-DAY.

The SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY

2, West Regent St., Glasgow.
10, Essex St., Strand, London, W.C.2.

Millgate Buildings, Long Millgate, MANCHESTER.
62, Dale Street, LIVERPOOL.
Post Office House, Infirmary Street, LEEDS.
8, Newhall Street, BIRMINGHAM.

"I Give My Wife £2,000."

"And I am a poor man, too—really much poorer than one of the so-called 'New poor.' Yet on my wife's birthday I gave her £2,000.

"When we sat down for breakfast on that memorable morning I produced a document, and handed it to her with the remark, 'Now listen while I tell you why I am giving you this £2,000.

"'This is an investment policy with the Sun Life of Canada, and I have made the first payment of £116 12s., and should I die to-morrow, either through illness or accident, you would receive £2,000, plus half the deposit I have just paid—altogether £2,058 6s.

"'This policy is to be in force for twenty years. Now suppose, as I am now forty, that I live to be sixty years of age, we shall receive from the Sun Life of Canada about £2,900—another and a better birthday gift for both of us, eh?'"

"But," said my wife, "how does it happen that you are entitled to a sum of £2,900 in twenty years?"

"Why, in just this way: all the deposits are really investments, and my dividends accumulate until the twenty years are up. On the basis of past experience these dividends will amount to £900."

"It's splendid," she replied.

"Yes, it is," I went on, "and if anything should happen to me you and the children will now be secure from want. . . . For instance, if I died in the twelfth year you are bound to receive £2,699 12s.; that is, the original £2,000 plus 50 per cent. of all my deposits.

"Then, as regards the annual deposit, I deduct that amount from my income before paying income-tax, thus saving £17 10s., making my net payments £99 2s. per annum.

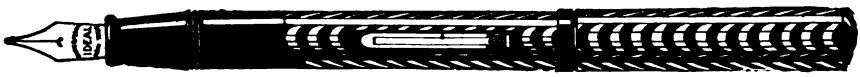
"That is not all, either. If in years to come we strike a patch of bad luck, I can look inside the Policy and see at a glance what is the surrender value. The table there tells me at once what the company will advance as a loan on the Policy."

"Well, John," my wife remarked, "this is some birthday gift. I can't help thinking that we have never spent money to better purpose."

"Rather," I said. "It is a fine provision for our old age."

And that's how I gave my wife £2,000.

The Assets of the Sun Life of Canada exceed £23,000,000, and are under strict Government supervision. Anyone interested should write at once for full particulars, giving his or her age and the amount it is proposed to invest annually. All communications treated in confidence. Write to J. F. JUNKIN (Manager), Sun Life of Canada, 6, Canada House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2.



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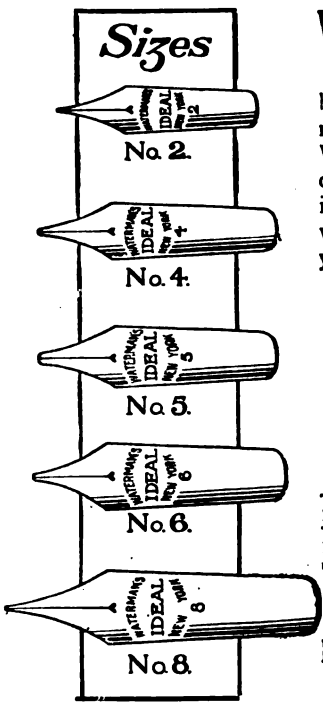


Which is YOUR Ideal?

If you write with a steel pen you have a favourite nib. That steel nib can be matched exactly in a Waterman's Ideal—matched not only in its point, but in its flexibility and action. If it isn't right we will gladly exchange it gratis—then you will have your ideal for life.

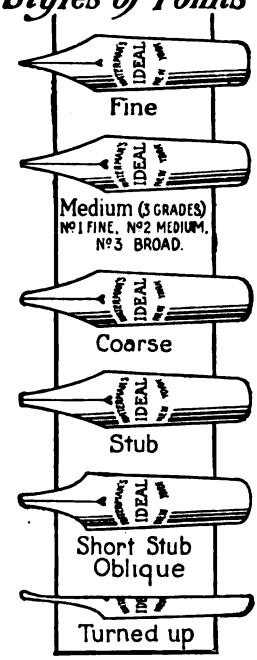
Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

Three Types of Waterman's Ideal: "Self-Filling" and "Safety," **17/6 and upwards**; "Regular," **12/6 and upwards**; No. 54, "Self-Filling," and No. 44, "Safety," with extra large nib, at **22/6, especially recommended.**

Of Stationers and Jewellers everywhere. Write for a copy of "The Pen Book."

L. G. Sloan, Ltd. The Pen Corner
Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

Styles of Points



Shoes you can *depend upon*—

SAXONE

(Regd. Trade Mark.)

IF you will buy a pair of these shoes at your nearest 'Saxone' shop and give them hard wear, you will see how wise it is to invest in good, honest leather and careful workmanship.

STYLE 4140.
Brown willow calf Derby Shoe, stout walking sole, Edinburgh full toe, extended heel.
Price 39/9.
STYLE 4154.
Same in black calf, same price.
STYLE 4139.
In black calf, but with lighter sole, same price.

SOLD ONLY BY THE SAXONE SHOE CO. LTD.
LONDON: 5 & 6 Coventry Street, W.1; 231 Regent Street, W.1; 56 & 57 Strand, W.C.2; 11-12 Cheapside, E.C.2.
And all large towns.

"Musterole is Good for Aches and Pains"

For headache or neuralgia—for rheumatism—for sudden colds or sore throats, Musterole offers quick relief. Musterole has all the virtues of the old time mustard plaster but is without sting or blister. Musterole is a clean, white ointment, made from oil of mustard. Just rub it on the spot where there is pain or congestion and it soon generates a peculiar heat which disperses congestion and sends pain away. Doctors and nurses recommend Musterole—keep it handy on your medicine shelf.

Your Chemist sells Musterole, 2/6 a jar.

MILLER'S
MUSTEROLE
WILL NOT BLISTER

THOS. CHRISTY & CO.,
4-12, Old Swan Lane,
London, E.C.4.

Restful and Home-like Upholstery at Economical Prices.

THE "HOLYROOD."

EASY PAYMENTS or CASH.

CARRIAGE PAID TO ANY RAILWAY STATION.

Cash with order.

Settee, one end adjustable, Loose Cushion, **£19** or Easy Payment **£21—£3** down, **15/-** mthly.
Arm Chair, "Forty-winks" Head Rests, **£10** „ „ **£11—£2** „ **10/-** „
Divan Chair, Club Pattern - - - **£9** „ „ **£10—£2** „ **10/-** „
Three-Piece Set, Settee & Pair of Chairs, **£38** „ „ **£42—£4** „ **30/-** „

Luxurious and soundly upholstered. Woollen Flocks. Coppered Steel Springs. British Webs. Seats, Backs and Arms all well sprung. Covered in a variety of French and other Tapestries. Patterns submitted for Customer's selection.

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. (Dept. E). **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL**

A Peerless Beauty

says :—

"I always use POND'S VANISHING CREAM. I have always looked upon it as the best. I shall always use it, as it is so refreshing."

SO writes ***Miss Marie Blanche*** ; and such famous and charming ladies as Madame Tetrazzini, Miss Irene Vanbrugh and Miss Sybil Thorndike also "look on Pond's as the *best.*" Pond's is the *original* Vanishing Cream, delicately scented with Jacqueminot roses. Apply Pond's regularly to the face, neck, and hands night and morning, and at any convenient time during the day. It vanishes into the skin instantly and forms an effective protector against cold wind, rain and dust.

"IT SOOTHES & SMOOTHS THE SKIN."

In handsome Opal Jars with Aluminium Screw Lids, 1/3 and 2/6, and Collapsible Tubes, 9d. and 1/3, of all Chemists and Stores. If you cannot obtain the new tube from your Chemist to-day, send us 9d. and we will despatch it per return, post free.

POND'S EXTRACT CO. (Dept. 30), 71, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

Pond's Vanishing Cream

£500
Offered for Ideas
YOUR OPPORTUNITY

GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., Proprietors of the "Strand Magazine," etc., offer the above sum for a Simple Suggestion.

TRY IT!

THIS competition is open to every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE or any other of Newnes' publications, a list of which is given on the facing page. You need no artistic, literary, or even business knowledge to win one of the prizes. The child at school, the wife in the home, and the man in the street have all an equal chance. Read what follows :—

IDEAS ARE WORTH MONEY

Few people realize the importance of the *idea* in an advertisement. Many of the most famous advertisements of our time are the results of simple suggestions made by people who knew nothing of the craft of publicity. The well-known phrase "Worth a Guinea a Box" originated in that way. Again, "Bubbles" was not painted as an advertisement of Pears' Soap, but a member of the firm saw its possibilities, and the picture was purchased. Scores of similar instances could be given.

First Prize -	£200
Second Prize	£100
Third Prize -	£50
20 Prizes of-	- £5
25 Prizes of-	- £2

No Entrance Fee

WE WANT YOURS

Everybody has ideas of this kind at some time or other—a happy phrase which may become the "slogan" of a great business, a rough suggestion which may blossom out as a poster of world-wide fame. We are convinced that hundreds of good ideas are wasted for lack of opportunity to utilize them. Well, here is the opportunity. If you have an idea or suggestion of any kind which you think may be of any use to any of the advertisers in any of the Newnes publications, SEND IT IN.

AN EQUAL CHANCE FOR ALL

WHAT TO DO

Look through the advertisement pages of this magazine ; select any advertisement you like, see if you can get a new "idea" for advertising the same article—or an improvement on the advertisement. Try to pick out the essential points which the advertiser is trying to convey ; then see whether you can present them in more novel or striking manner. Apply this test to several advertisements and you will soon find suggestions coming to you—a phrase, a suggestion for a picture, or an *idea* for a picture.

WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR IDEA, sketch it out, or describe it in a few words as plainly as possible, attach the coupon, and send in as directed in the Rules. Remember that it does not matter whether your sketch is good or bad, from an art point of view, or whether your idea is described in polished phrases or not. It is the *Idea*, and the idea alone, that will count.

All Ideas sent in will first be submitted to a committee of advertisement experts. It will be their business to utilize and carry out your ideas in proper form. They may be sent in crude or imperfect. In this way any lack of technical knowledge on the part of the competitor will be made good, and the Final Judges will have only the *merit* of the idea itself to consider.

THE FINAL JUDGES

When the ideas have been thus "laid out" equally effectively from a technical point of view, they will be submitted to the Final Judges, who will then decide upon their relative merits *as ideas*, and award the prizes accordingly. The following gentlemen, all of whom are well known in the advertising world, have kindly consented to act in this capacity :—

Sir FRANK NEWNES, Bart.
The Right Hon. LORD RIDDELL.
H. GREENHOUGH SMITH,
Editor "Strand Magazine."
GALLOWAY FRASER,
Editor "Tit-Bits."

You can take your idea from any Advertisement appearing in any of the Newnes Publications published during the months of MAY, JUNE, JULY, *and* AUGUST, 1921.

STRAND MAGAZINE
TIT-BITS
JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY
LADIES' FIELD
The HOME MAGAZINE
THE WIDE WORLD
The GRAND MAGAZINE
OUR HOMES AND GARDENS
WOMAN'S LIFE
THE CAPTAIN
Leach's LADY'S COMPANION
,, NEWEST FASHIONS
,, CHILDREN'S FASHIONS

READ THESE RULES.

1.—All entries which do not conform to these conditions will be disqualified.

2.—All Ideas submitted must apply to one of the commodities advertised in this or any other of the Newnes publications (see list below).

3.—Competitors may submit as many Ideas as they choose, but each separate Idea must be accompanied by a coupon cut from the publication in which appears the advertisement to which the Idea refers.

4.—All Ideas to which prizes are awarded become the absolute property of GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

5.—No Ideas can be returned, but any unsuccessful entries which appear to possess merit may be submitted to advertisers, and, if used, paid for by arrangement.

6.—The Judges' decision must be accepted by all competitors as absolutely final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Entries should be addressed to THE COMPETITION EDITOR, GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8, Southampton St., Strand, W.C.2, and the envelope marked "IDEAS" in the bottom left-hand corner. THEY MUST BE RECEIVED NOT LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 1921.

DON'T CONFINE YOUR EFFORTS TO THIS MAGAZINE. LOOK THROUGH THE OTHER PAPERS MENTIONED ABOVE. SEND AS MANY EFFORTS AS YOU LIKE.

Coupon

£500

Good for ONE ENTRY in the Geo. Newnes' ADVERTISING IDEAS COMPETITION

POST THIS COUPON WITH YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO
The Competition Editor
GEO. NEWNES, LTD.
8 · SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND · W.C.2

Every Room

in the House needs the brightening touch of Johnson's Prepared Wax. It will rejuvenate your furniture, woodwork, floors and linoleum—preserve the original finish—and give your home that bright, well-groomed appearance.

Johnson's Prepared Wax imparts a lustre of great beauty and durability. It gives a hard, dry, velvety polish which will not collect dust or show finger prints.

JOHNSON'S

Paste - Liquid - Powdered

PREPARED WAX

Johnson's Prepared Wax is made in paste, liquid and powdered form. Use the **Liquid Wax** for polishing furniture, leather goods, woodwork and motor cars. We advise the **Paste Wax** for polishing floors of all kinds—wood, linoleum, etc.

For a Perfect Dancing Surface

Just sprinkle Johnson's Powdered Wax over any floor. The feet of the dancers will spread the Wax, polishing the floor and putting it in perfect condition for dancing.

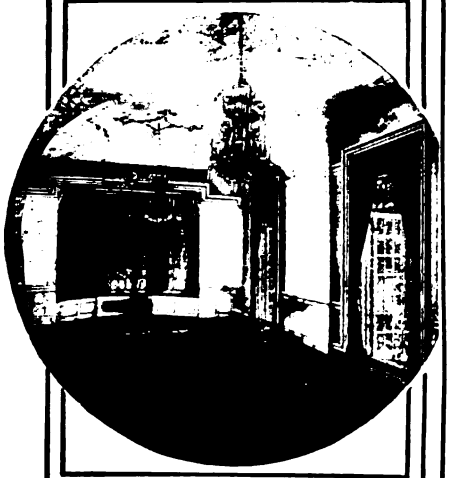
Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste, in 6d., 1/6, 2/-, 2/6, 4/-, 8/-, and 14/6 sizes.
Johnson's Prepared Wax Liquid, in 2/6, 4/- and 8/- sizes.
Johnson's Prepared Wax Powdered, in 1/9, 2/6, and 4/- sizes.

Send Sixpence for a Trial Tin of Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste.

Insist upon "Johnson's"—there is no substitute.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON,
West Drayton, Midx.

Racine, U.S.A., Brantford, Canada, Sydney, Australia.



Another choice
DRAWING-ROOM
effect produced with
"SATINETTE."

Deydol Distemper instead of Wall-paper is a splendid investment, and **Cripon Supervar** on surfaces requiring varnishing is unsurpassed for fine appearance and durability.

All good class Decorators will use the above materials at your request.

Satinette
TRADE MARK
ENAMEL PAINT

THE MOST ATTRACTIVE AND ENDURING OF ALL MODERN DECORATIVE "FINISHES"

IT is bad policy to keep postponing decorative work that needs doing. Procrastination means that you miss the comfort and quiet satisfaction that nice decorations afford—and all the time your property is deteriorating in value.

Make up your mind—CALL IN YOUR DECORATOR TO-DAY, tell him what you want done and ask him to use "SATINETTE" Enamel Paint for the finishing coat on all Doors, Skirtings, Mouldings, Window Frames, etc. — the result will be as beautiful and durable as porcelain tiling and a tribute to your taste.

A beautiful brochure telling you all about "SATINETTE" will be sent post free on request to the manufacturers named below. When applying please mention the name and address of your usual Decorator.

PINCHIN, JOHNSON & CO., Ltd.
Enamel, Varnish, Paint,
& Colour Manufacturers,
General Buildings, Aldwych, LONDON, W.C.2.

NAVY BLUE
LIGHT NAVY
SAXE BLUE
SHELL PINK
OLD ROSE
RUST RED
GERANIUM RED
GRASS GREEN
RESEDA

LILAC
PURPLE
WINE
GREY
NIGGER BROWN
TABAC BROWN
DAFFODIL YELLOW
OLD GOLD
BLACK

Lady "Di" says Twink adds Joy to the Jumper-

THERE is a new pleasure in wearing jumpers and other garments when they have been through a Twink bath. They take on a new charm and freshness. Twink adds joy to your personal wear—keeps your garments dainty.

Twink will dye coloured materials to a bright new shade or restore them to their original colours when faded, and white fabrics may be dyed to any of the eighteen beautiful shades in which Twink is made.

PRICE 7½D. PER PACKET

Of all Grocers, Stores, Oilmen, Chandlers, etc.

CLEANS AND DYES AT THE SAME TIME.

Twink

MADE BY THE MAKERS OF LUX

Tw 7—28

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED. PORT SUNLIGHT

Do You Value Personal Attraction?

If so you cannot afford to despise so indispensable an accessory as pearls, which have a remarkable aptitude for enhancing the wearer's natural charms.

They are a DISTINCTIVE FINISH to an elegant evening toilette, a stylish afternoon frock, or a charming blouse.

The truly feminine woman loves pearls because of their beauty and responsiveness, and above all for their adaptability to all occasions; hence, if wise, she will exercise the same taste and discrimination in selecting these as in the choice of her gowns.

Ciro Pearls

are made for those who realise that it is an unnecessary extravagance to purchase expensive pearls from the orient, when such remarkably realistic copies are obtainable.

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea we will send you a necklet of No. 1 quality Ciro Pearls, 16in. long, complete with case, or a ring, brooch, ear-rings, or any other jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days, and we will refund your money.

Other lengths at proportionate rate—gold clasp 2 6 extra.

Our booklet, No. 12, contains designs of all new jewels (sent post free).

CIRO PEARLS, Ltd. (Dept. 12), **39, OLD BOND ST., W.1** (Piccadilly End).

Our Showrooms are on the First Floor over Lloyd's Bank.

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **10/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

RONUK
the best of POLISHES for Linoleum —makes it wear longer

SOLD EVERYWHERE.
Write for illustrated leaflet,
RONUK, Ltd., Portslade, Sussex.

Have you tried "RONUK" Motor-Car Polish?

Aids Digestion.

Eat plenty of Hovis bread-and-butter and you can forget digestive troubles.

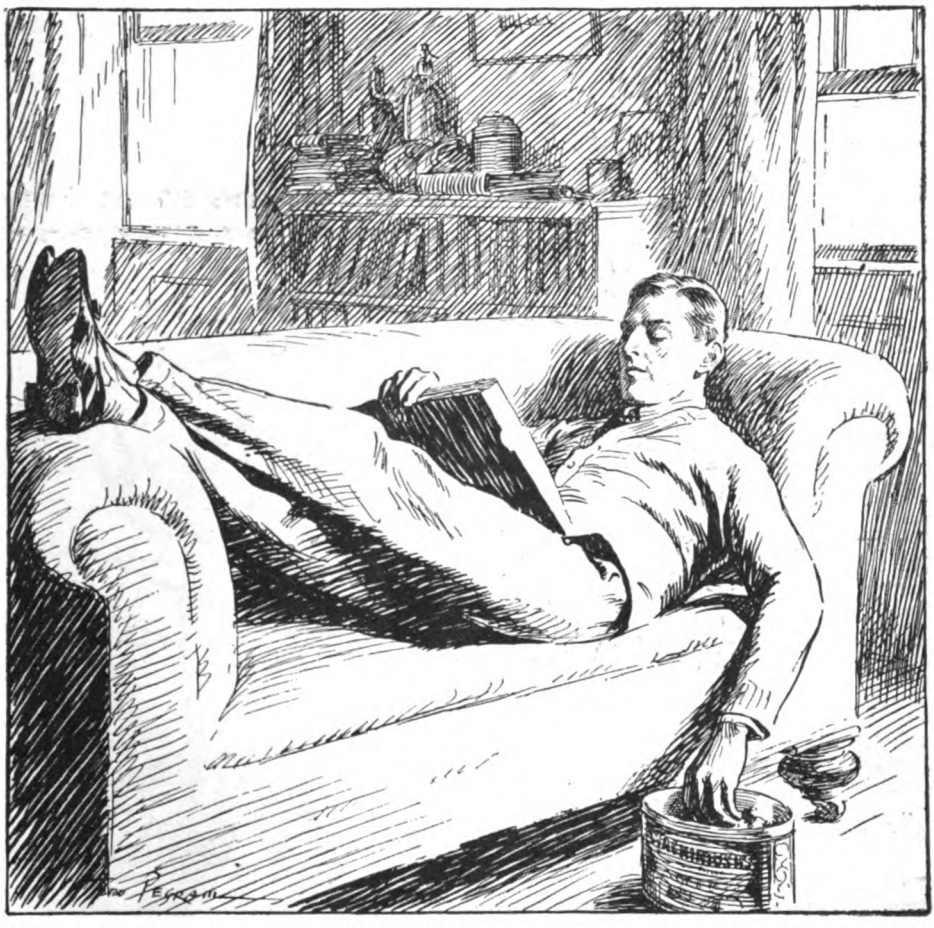
HŌVIS
(Trade Mark)

flour has a generous admixture of the nitrogenous element of wheat which builds up the frame, repairs tissue-waste, **and helps the digestion of starch**—so often the cause of poor digestion.

That is why Hovis is so much better than ordinary brown or white bread.

Your Baker Bakes it.

Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe



Good Things of Life——Good Books and

Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe

When you dip into a Mackintosh's Tin you are even more sure of satisfaction than when you dip into a new book by your favourite author —the goodness of Mackintosh's is consistent, every piece is the most delicious of good toffee.

Sold by Confectioners everywhere in ½-lb., 1-lb., and 4-lb. Family Tins, and loose by weight.

Try also the very latest in sweetmeats, Mackintosh's Egg-and-Cream-de-Luxe. Also Chocolate Toffee-de-Luxe, a blending of the finest of Chocolate with the best of Toffees.

P29

DRUMMER DYES DRUMMER DYES

Follow the Drummer

Home-Dyeing has always been successful with Drummer Dyes: *your* Drummer-Dyeing will succeed.

In the wake of the Drummer Economy is achieved without Worry. Fabrics of Silk, Cotton and Wool (and mixtures of any of these) are most successfully dyed at home by the simple Drummer process, for which full instructions are given on each packet—and you will get double and treble wear from all fabrics.

21 Colours

Light Blue	Saxe Blue	Navy
Light Green	Dark Green	Emerald
Myrtle	Brown	Nigger Brown
Red	Cardinal	Maroon
Rust	Shell Pink	Pink
Daffodil	Heliotrope	Mauve
Grey	Tangerine	Black

Sold by all Grocers, Stores, Oilmen and Chemists.

Send for Free Booklet on Home-Dyeing to

Sole Manufacturers: WM. EDGE & SONS, Ltd., Bolton.

4d. per Pkt.

Drummer Dyes are ready for use, needing no addition except hot or boiling water.

Never say "Dye," say "Drummer."
One Dye for all Fabrics. So Easy to Use.

ΦC1

DRUMMER DYES

Here's Health!!

I give you—CONCORD—
a toast worth drinking and a
Wine worth drinking too!

There's health and good cheer in a bottle of CONCORD. Mellow and digestible through long maturing, it is the wine for all those cheerful occasions where exquisite flavour adds a zest to the enjoyment, and mellow ripeness gives a quiet content and satisfaction. It takes very many years to fill a bottle of CONCORD.

Concord Port is supplied in three qualities to suit all tastes: V.O.P. Fine old tawny. MAXIME. Superb old tawny, great age. VINTAGE. Of the famous years 1884, 1887, 1896, and 1900.

Sold by leading Wine and Spirit Merchants everywhere, and obtainable at hotels and clubs. Ask for and insist on having CONCORD.

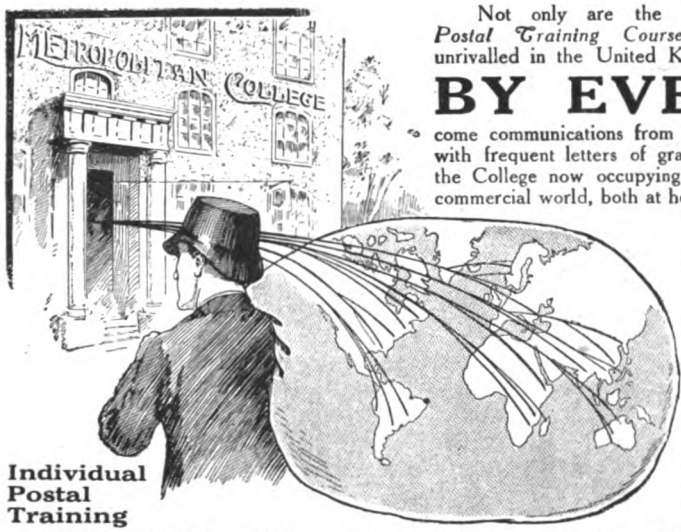
Wholesale enquiries apply to:

W. H. CHAPLIN & CO., Ltd.,
48, Mark Lane, London, E.C.3.

CONCORD PORT

C.Q.I.

The WORLD-WIDE RAMIFICATIONS of the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE



Individual Postal Training

Not only are the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE *Postal Training Courses in Higher Business Subjects* unrivalled in the United Kingdom, but

BY EVERY POST

come communications from **present and future students overseas,** with frequent letters of grateful thanks from former students of the College now occupying high and lucrative positions in the commercial world, both at home and abroad.

LIST OF SUBJECTS.

Accountancy.	Income Tax.
Secretaryship.	Company Law.
London B. Com. Degree.	Advertising and Sales Management.
Banking.	Business Organisation.
Costing and Factory Organisation.	Economics.
	Shorthand, etc., etc.

SPECIAL COACHING FOR THE NEW DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF COMMERCE

SPECIMEN TRIBUTES.

"Please allow me to offer you my sincere thanks for your complete and effective course. The studies have been so finely conceived that I found myself studying for the joy of it. One feature of the examination which surprised me was how everyone there regarded the Metropolitan College as a household word." F.R., London. (Present salary £1,000; age 32.)

"No doubt you will be pleased to hear that, after passing the Inter. L.A.A., I was offered and accepted a position as Senior Accountant on the staff of a large firm of Chartered Accountants in this city, *at a figure practically three times greater than that which I was then receiving. Without the training I received at your institution, I could never have hoped to obtain such a position.* You may rest assured that I never fail to recommend your College when opportunity occurs." E.B. (Present salary £600; age 23.)

In the professional Accountancy and Secretarial Examinations, the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE frequently presents MORE SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS THAN ALL OTHER TRAINING CENTRES PUT TOGETHER

While thousands of students enrol purely for the acquisition of the very valuable and practical training afforded, there is an advantage in sitting one or more of the examinations held by the recognised professional bodies, inasmuch as a successful candidate receives the DIPLOMA of the examining body, and is entitled in due course to append to his name the designatory and *status-stamping* initials of a Fellowship of a recognised Association of qualified Accountants and/or Secretaries.

For full particulars of the many valuable courses offered by the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE, write to-day (a postcard will suffice) for the

"STUDENTS' GUIDE"—FREE and POST PAID.

The New Edition, just published, contains particulars of many additional courses specially designed to meet *post-bellum* requirements, and should be in the hands of all potential students. *The "STUDENTS' GUIDE" is a comprehensive volume containing a great deal of useful information; it is not a mere booklet.* Write for your copy *to-day*; applications dealt with in strict rotation.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE,
Dept. S, ST. ALBANS.

Have you ever had a Suit FRENCH CLEANED?

French Cleaning acts like Magic, it rejuvenates old clothing in a wonderful manner.

YOUR SUIT, OVERCOAT, OR COSTUME French Cleaned from 8/6

REPAIRING AND TURNING A SPECIALITY.
Write for particulars of our Tailor Valet Service.

The West End Tailoring & Valeting Co.,
(Dept. S), 33, Southwick St., Paddington, London, W.2.
TELE. PADD. 4096.
Proprietors:
French Cleaning & Dyeing Co., Ltd.
BRANCHES THROUGHOUT LONDON.

CUT YOUR OWN HAIR
WITH THE
"JONBUL"
SELF-HAIRCUTTER

Send for one to-day. Try it at Home Free. Money Returned if not Satisfied.

10/- POST FREE.

The **"Jonbul"** cuts hair as it combs it, gives a clean, smooth cut without tearing, because of the ingenious arrangement of the blades. Takes off much or little, cannot take off too much, and is instantly adjustable to cut long or short hair. Occasional use keeps hair smart and trim. Call or **Send 10/-** for Nickel-plated Cutter, 2 extra blades; **12/6**. Silver-plated Cutter, 4 extra blades; **17/6** Gold-plated Cutter, 6 extra blades. *Each Cutter is fitted on comb and sent in box with directions.*

"JONBUL" Self-Haircutter (S.M.4), 44 Hatton Gdn., London, E.C.

"THERE NEVER WAS SUCH A SALINE AS ALKIA SALTRATES"

No other Specific for Kidney, Stomach, Blood, Liver and Bowel Disorders has ever received such universal endorsement. The Champions and Leaders in every branch of sport say they cannot do without it.

What GEORGES CARPENTIER

(Heavyweight Champion of Europe)

says about this truly remarkable product. It stands alone in a class by itself.

Like Jimmy Wilde, Billy Wells, Joe Beckett, Ernest Barry, Jack Donaldson, Tom Payne, and more than three hundred other leading figures in the world of sport, Carpentier uses Alkia Saltrates regularly and gives some common-sense advice which simply MUST be followed by anyone who expects either to cure any ailment or to ensure perfect physical fitness.

Acids, poisons, and impurities constantly forming within the body may accumulate and foul the blood, upset the stomach, and clog the liver, kidneys, and intestines, thus forming the primary cause of practically all illness and disease. Unless you keep your body free of such contamination, you can never expect to keep physically up to par and always mentally alert, even if no really serious illness results.

Carpentier's advice in his own words, as to how everyone can keep the body always fit and practically disease-proof, is as follows :—

"First—The morning bath to cleanse the body *externally*. Second—The daily ablution or thorough cleansing *internally*. Now, by using the term ablution, you must not infer that a purging of the internal organs is necessary every twenty-four hours. Far from it; there is a simple compound known as Alkia Saltrates, a half-teaspoonful of which dissolved in hot water (or in your tea) and drunk first thing in the morning, before breakfast, I have proved will effectively remove all congestion and impurities from liver, kidneys, and intestines without causing the slightest discomfort or pain. The brain and vision are thus made wonderfully clear and active, and my Manager, M. Descamps, assures me that for rheumatism, gout, and all uric acid disorders, Alkia Saltrates cannot be equalled. I also find that following dinner a very small quantity of the compound dissolved in a tumbler of cool water makes a wonderful drink to assist digestion of the food."

G. Carpentier

NOTE.—The remarkably efficient and pleasant-tasting compound referred to above can be obtained from any chemist at 3s. 3d. a large bottle, sufficient to last the entire family for weeks.

For all weather at all seasons.

Made in various qualities and shades for civilian wear —for golfing, walking, shooting, motoring, riding, cycling, etc., etc.

Made to fasten at knee or ankle.

(Fox's Improved Puttees) F.I.P. "Non-Fray Spiral."

FOX'S PUTTEES

	Per pair
Regulation Heavy Weight - - -	9/-
Extra Fine Light Weight - - -	11/-
Extra Fine Light Shade - - -	12/-

CAUTION.
See that the name 'FOX' is on the metal discs (right and left)

attached to every genuine pair of FOX'S New Non-Fray Spiral Puttees.

Patentees & Sole Manufacturers:
FOX BROS. & CO., Ltd.
(Dept. F), **Wellington, Somerset.**
Agents for United States:
The Manley & Johnson Corporation,
260, West Broadway, New York, U.S.A.

Sherlock Holmes—

"You will observe, my dear Watson, that the Laces are Paton's. It is therefore obvious that the wearer is a man of great discrimination."

Unfortunately for themselves, few people pay sufficient attention to the laces they buy, with the result that some get laces that break quickly, others laces that are a continual source of annoyance because the tags come off, and many laces that soon look shabby.

PATON'S BOOT & SHOE LACES

Hundreds of high-grade mercerised cotton threads go to the making of Paton's Laces, making them strong and giving lasting wear. Every one of these threads has been dyed with fast colours, so that Paton's Laces retain their smart appearance to the end. Finally, Paton's fast tags don't come off, saving you endless time and worry.

Next time don't simply ask for Laces — say Paton's. It's worth while.

WM. PATON, LTD.,
JOHNSTONE, SCOTLAND.

Pr.

THE MARK:

By Request—

Many of our customers who appreciate the particular QUALITY of TURF Virginia Cigarettes in the larger size packets of 20 have asked if we would put them up in the more popular size packets of 10; and at a popular price. Therefore, TURF Cigarettes —of the same QUALITY which is so appreciated in the larger sizes—are *also* now put up in JUBILEE size at 10 for 6d., 20 for 1s. Made by Alexander Boguslavsky, Ltd., 55, Piccadilly, London, W.

The Mark.

The Mark of the Winged Horse upon the Packet is a guarantee of "Quality." This Mark means much to the Cigarette smoker. TURF Cigarettes are always the same Quality, always "up to the Mark."
The Price of TURF Cigarettes—JUBILEE Size—is 10 for 6d., 20 for 1s.
Think of the Mark: The Winged Horse. Think of the Price: 10 for 6d. Smoke one. You may then forget the PRICE—you will always remember the QUALITY.

10 for 6p **20 for 1/-**

TURF

JUBILEE

Know the *value* of a shirt by the *Tab* it bears.

REPLACED IF REQD PERMACOLA TRADE MARK COLOUR FADES

The Permanent Colour Shirting.

Choose your shirtings not merely for their attractiveness when new, but for the Guarantee of permanent smartness which the Permacola Tab implies. When you see this Tab you have the Manufacturers' definite undertaking that the Shirt will be replaced should the colour fade.

PERMACOLA Shirting Fabrics have the colours woven, not printed. There are hundreds of good designs, and thirty varieties of texture—all of the very finest grade of materials.

Obtain Shirts and Pyjamas of Permacola fabric from your own Shirtmaker or Outfitter. Also sold in the piece, for both Ladies' and Men's garments. ALWAYS look for the name PERMACOLA on the selvedge or on the garment tab.

Through Wholesale Only.

The HASLAM Fabrics

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HASLAMS, LTD., *Established 1816.* **MANCHESTER.**

All Prospective Campers

should send 3d. to LIGHTWEIGHT TENT Co. (Dept. S.), 61, High Holborn, London, for all lists. Cycle, Motor, Pedestrian (easily carried), Garden, Bathing Tents, Portable Light Baths and Hammock Beds a speciality. Tents as supplied to Officers of the 1st and 2nd Life Guards for Active Service. Our Outfits are a proved success all over the world.

Double Roof Colonial Tents Special

Shippers: Cox Shipping Agency, London, and India.

Myers' Silver Series

"The Pens that Glide"

SMOOTHEST AND BEST.

In 18 STYLES to suit every hand.

Send for Sample Set.

9d. from all Stationers or 11d. Post free from Sole Makers.

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The Safest way to buy her RING or yours is

after leisurely selection and careful comparison in the quietness of your home.

THE RING BOOK, which we will send to you, delineates 122 Gem Rings in all their Natural Sparkle, Colours, and Beauty. You can select from it as surely as if you were choosing from the actual Rings. People from all over the World are buying by this *safe* method.

After you have made your selection, we send the Ring, fully insured to your address, on a fortnight's unconditional approval. If, within 14 days of receipt, you wish to change your mind, we will either exchange the Ring, allowing full value for it, *or you can return it and have your money back in full.*

If you keep the Ring, you do so on this fair understanding:

Whenever you wish, after one year or twenty years, and subject to Ring Book Conditions, we will re-purchase your Ring at 10% less than the price paid.

WRITE NOW FOR "THE RING BOOK" describing our fair methods fully, and illustrating Engagement, Dress, and Men's Rings, priced from **£5 : 5 : 0 up to £325.**

The NORTHERN GOLDSMITHS Co.,
No. 6, GOLDSMITHS' HALL,
"The RING SHOP for the WORLD,"
NEWCASTLE-upon-TYNE, England.

"You *can't* possibly get wet in the

42/- "Mattamac"

Feather Weight Waterproof.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely waterproof. Light and compact-folding, Wind and Chill proof as well as Wet proof, a "Mattamac" is the *Ideal* Coat for Holiday and going-away Wear. Get one for Whitsuntide.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits into the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

42/-

For Lady or Gentleman. Also made for Officers and Rankers of Infantry and Cavalry.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The Coat worn by the 6ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

You can carry a "Mattamac" as easily as a newspaper or umbrella. You can even fold it to fit into your jacket pocket, or Attaché Case, when the Sun shines. Yet it gives complete protection in the worst weather—at less than half the cost, and one-third the weight, of ordinary Weathercoats.

Illustrations show Models Nos 1 and 2, at **42/-** in "Mattamac," **77/6** in "Duo-Mattamac." The Belted Model "Mattamac" costs **47/6**, and Belted "Duo-Mattamac" **85/-**. To order "Duo-Mattamac," specify "Model No. 1 D.M." or "Model No. 2 D.M." Styles are identical, and drawn from actual photographs. The "Mattamac" itself is of single Fabric, and the "Duo-Mattamac" is double—two Fabrics united with proofing between.

*The "Mattamac"—Unbelted, **42/-**; Belted, **47/6**. "Duo-Mattamac," **77/6** & **85/-***

Model No. 1. Model No. 2.

MADE IN 11 MODELS, 6 SHADES, 40 SIZES.

Unbelted "Mattamacs" are made for Ladies and Gentlemen at 42/-, and for Children at size prices. Conduit Street, their birthplace and the World's Overcoat centre, is represented in the graceful, tailored "hang," wide skirt, easy Raglan shoulders, and roomy under-arms. You *can* pay twice the price without getting such a surely-protective Wet-weather Coat.

Each "Mattamac" has wind-strapped adjustable cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, is conscientiously finished in all details, and is guaranteed to be made entirely from the genuine all-weather-proof "Matta" Fabric. In ordering, please give measurement around chest over waistcoat (Ladies measure over the blouse), state height, and enclose remittance.

The featherweight "Mattamac" *itself* is "just right" for 75% of people. For those who need a *heavier* Coat, for hard, rough, Sporting, or Working, wear, we have produced the durable, wear-defying

DUO-MATTAMAC

PEARSON BROTHERS

45 CONDUIT ST. LONDON, W. 1.

Double Fabric and Wear

34 ozs. Weight, 77/6 up

Less than Double Weight & Price

In cut, style, and finish, it is identical with the featherweight "Mattamac." The only difference is that the 19 oz. featherweight Coat is made up from *single* "Matta" Fabric, whilst the 34 oz. "Duo-Mattamac" is cut from *double* "Matta" Fabric—*two* of the tough, finely-spun cloths *united*, with the proofing *between*.

"Duo-Mattamac" Coats, though double *all through*, are medium-weight. The ordinary unbelted Coat is, roughly, two-thirds the weight of a Gabardine Raincoat. "Duo-Mattamac" Stormproofs are made in eleven models, following *exactly* the *cut* and *styles* of Featherweight "Mattamac" Coats.

"Duo-Mattamac" Coats are the strongest, medium-weight Stormproofs made. They are produced *particularly* for the 25% of outdoor folk whose sport or work calls for a Fabric of *extreme toughness*, yet who do not want to be burdened with *undue weight*. Prices from 77/6 up to 122/6. Write for the "Mattamac" Booklet 26Q to Pearson Bros. (address below), and you will receive, also, full particulars of "Duo-Mattamac" Stormproofs with sample of their Fabric.

FEATHERWEIGHT "MATTA" FABRIC

from which the "Mattamac" Weathercoat is entirely made, is a light-weight, closely-woven, intensely-strong and compact-folding material. It is tough, clean-wearing, and absolutely waterproof—so waterproof than even wind-driven rain cannot penetrate a "Mattamac."

SENT TO YOU ON 7 DAYS' FREE APPROVAL.

You can satisfy yourself about a "Mattamac" or "Duo-Mattamac" in actual wear. Each Coat is sent out on the understanding that it can be returned within seven days in exchange for the full purchase price should you so wish. You take no risk whatever in buying the "Mattamac" or "Duo-Mattamac" Stormproof; if you do not like the Coat, you need not keep it.

SEND FOR "MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLET, POST FREE

Send a p.c. for the "Mattamac" Booklet **"26Q"** and free patterns of "Matta" single and double Fabrics. The Booklet introduces eleven "Mattamac" Models, including Town and Country Models (**42/-**) for Ladies and Gentlemen, the popular Belted Models for Ladies, Soldiers, and Civilians (**47/6**), and the Wide-skirted Cavalry Model (unbelted, 22oz., **59/6**; belted, 24½oz., **65/-**). The double-thickness "Duo-Mattamac" Models (unbelted, **77/6**; belted, **85/-**) are described fully in it also.

Write to-day for the "Mattamac" Booklet **"26Q"** and prevailing shades of "Matta" Fabrics, Ordering Forms, etc., to the Sole Manufacturers of "Mattamac" and "Duo-Mattamac" Stormproofs:

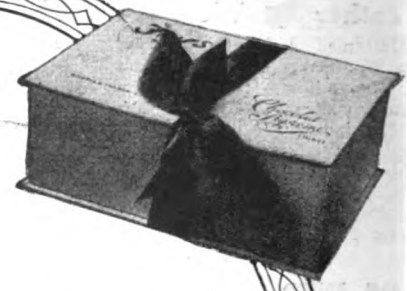
PEARSON BROTHERS

KINGSTON HOUSE,

45, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1.

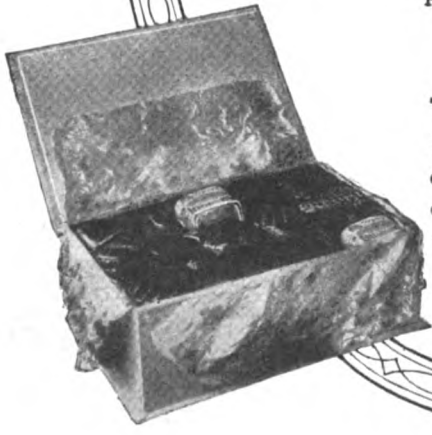
The "MATTAMAC" TRADE MARKS are registered throughout THE WORLD. (COPYRIGHT RESERVED)

Fry's Chocolat Suprême



A GIFT OF DISCERNMENT—

recently introduced by the **Oldest House in the Trade,** whose 193 years' reputation stands for the **Purity, Quality,** and **Excellence** of all their productions.



Their Chocolat Suprême Boxes contain many delightful novelties.

Manufactured by
J. S. FRY & SONS LTD
BRISTOL & LONDON

Make This Test

See how teeth glisten then

All statements approved by authorities

This ten-day test costs nothing. To millions it has brought a new era in teeth-cleaning. This is to urge that you try this method. Then let your own teeth show you what it means to you and yours.

To fight the film

The object is to fight the film which is now regarded as a potential source of most tooth troubles. Film is that viscous coat you feel. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and remains. The old methods of brushing do not end it. So, despite all care, tooth troubles have been constantly increasing.

It is the film-coat that discolours, not the teeth. And nearly all teeth brushed in old ways are coated more or less.

Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth, and the acid may cause decay.

A daily combatant

Dental science has now found ways to daily combat this film. For five years the methods have been carefully watched and proved. Now leading dentists advise them.

These methods are embodied in a dentifrice called Pepsodent. Millions now know it and employ it. The results are seen in glistening teeth to-day.

Acts in five ways

One ingredient in Pepsodent is pepsin. Another multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva to digest starch deposits that cling. The alkalinity of the saliva is multiplied also. That to neutralize mouth acids as they form.

Two factors directly attack the film. One of them keeps teeth so highly polished that film cannot easily adhere.

With every application, Pepsodent protects the teeth in new and efficient ways. To millions it is bringing cleaner, whiter teeth.

Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film coats disappear.

This test will be a revelation. Make it now. Cut out and send the coupon.

Pepsodent MARK TRADE

The New-Day Dentifrice

A scientific film combatant, combined with two other modern requisites. Now advised for daily use by leading dentists. Supplied in large tubes by druggists.

507

10-DAY TUBE FREE.

THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
Dept. 131, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1.
Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

Address.....

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Give full address. Write plainly.
Only one tube to a family. STRAND M/May.

10,000 WERE SOLD DURING DECEMBER

English Hall-marked Solid Gold Watch & Solid Gold expanding bracelet 15 Jewelled compensated lever movement, highly finished

£3·18·9 WITH MOIRE SILK OR LEATHER STRAP £2-18-9

ON APPROVAL
Trade Inquiries Invited
10 YEARS WRITTEN GUARANTEE

Superior Quality & finish 15 Jewelled lever movement in extra heavy Hall-marked gold case & solid gold expanding Bracelet

WITH MOIRE SILK OR LEATHER STRAP £3-17-6 £4·17·6

KINGS CROSS &

Bravingtons

296-298 PENTONVILLE RD. KINGS CROSS, N.1.

71 LUDGATE HILL

SAVING THE BUMP. What tires you in walking isn't the effort of moving your legs so much as the bump, bump, bump, of your heel on the ground. Nothing is so fatiguing to the body as jarring. It not only eats up physical strength, it tires the nerve centres, too, and therefore tires all over. You can walk five miles on a golf course with no more fatigue than three miles on a city side-walk. The springy turf saves the "bump." You can walk the five miles on the city side-walk with

Ladies' & Gents' TRED-AIR HEEL CUSHIONS (Patented)

in your shoes, with no more fatigue than three miles without them. They also "save the bump." They suspend you on an air cushion. They absorb all the jar, put spring into your gait and double your walking powers. They slip inside your shoes, under your heel. No fitting necessary. No slipping on wet side-walks—invisible, comfortable, restful. Send size to your shoe-dealer, or post free 1/6, from

LIVINGSTON & DOUGHTY, LTD., Civita Works, LEICESTER.

SHORTHAND

Send for free illustrated handbook and lesson of the rapidly-acquired SLOAN-DUPLOYAN system. The only simple system used on the Official Parliamentary Reporting Staff.

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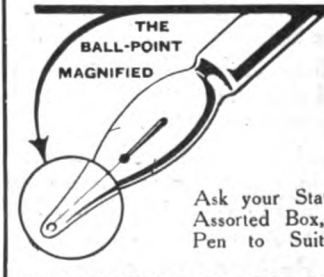
Sloan-Duployan Headquarters (Dept. A), Ramsgate.

BALL-POINTED PENS



Never Scratch or Spurt.

The Secret of Easy Writing is found on Every Point.

Ask your Stationer for a 6d. Assorted Box, and choose a Pen to Suit your Hand.

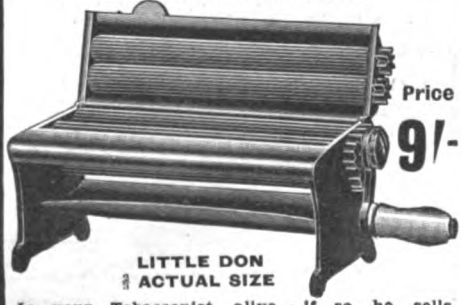
ORMISTON & GLASS, Snow Hill, London, E.C. Contractors for Pens to H.M. Government

EVANS'

Trade "CONCINNUM" Mark

CIGARETTE MACHINE

The Best and most convenient Table Machine on the market.



Price 9/-

LITTLE DON ⅓ ACTUAL SIZE

Is your Tobacconist alive—if so he sells "Concinnums." Ask him to show you this, also the Pocket size. If any difficulty in obtaining write to EVANS' "CONCINNUM" AND METAL WORKS, Ltd., Blackfriars House, London, E.C.4.

FLAX IN YOUR SHEETS

Far more refreshing sleep is obtained if your sheets are linen made by Robinson & Cleaver from the purest flax yarn, and these linen sheets give longer wear also.

No. SM.5. Plain Hemmed Linen Sheets, size 2 by 3 yards, at per pair for 76/2.

Linen Samples and our Catalogue No. 36L sent post free on request.

ROBINSON & CLEAVER, LTD., Linen Manufacturers, Belfast, Ireland.

By Appointment
CARRON

The Range of Results

Ideal cooking conditions are attained when the Carron Range is used. It has, indeed, revolutionised the culinary art. *The progress of cooking can be watched through an inner glass oven door*—which need not be opened until the food is ready for the table.

A Thermometer inside oven indicates the exact temperature. Size of fire can be increased or diminished at will. A copious supply of hot water is always assured, whilst a Hot Closet with sliding doors is provided for keeping dishes in season.

The foregoing features—and many others—have stamped the Carron Range as *the Range of Results.*

Sold by all Ironmongers and Hardware Merchants.

Write for No. 36F Range Catalogue — free on application.

CARRON COMPANY Works: CARRON, STIRLINGSHIRE.

Branch Works: PHŒNIX FOUNDRY, SHEFFIELD.

Showrooms: London (City)—15, Upper Thames Street, E.C.4; (West End)—50, Berners Street, W.1; Liverpool—22-30, Redcross Street; Glasgow—125, Buchanan Street; Edinburgh—114, George Street; Bristol—6, Victoria Street; Birmingham—218, 220, 222, Corporation Street.
Offices: Manchester—14, Ridgefield; Newcastle-on-Tyne—15, Prudhoe St.

Established in the Reign of George II.

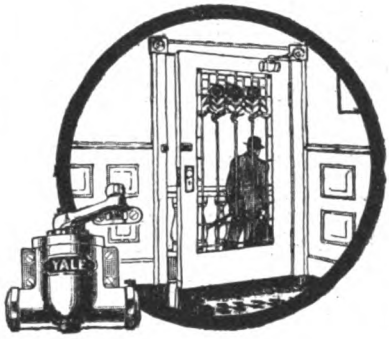
MOTOR LAUNCHES, MOTOR CANOES MOTOR PUNTS.

All Classes of Pleasure and Racing Boats, Punts, Dinghies, &c., suitable for Rivers, Lakes, and Private Waters.

Lists on Application. ***CANADIAN CANOES.*** *Largest Stock in the Kingdom.*

SALTER BROTHERS Limited 20 FOLLY BRIDGE, OXFORD.

YALE



Leave It To a Yale Door Closer

MAKE an end of door-closing neglect with a Yale Reversible Door Closer. No more door slamming, no more chilling draughts; less fuel expense and doctor bills.

Closes the door every time, quickly, silently, ending with a slow, sure push.

Fits any door in home, office, or factory —especially suitable for entrances. Sold by hardware dealers.

THE word Yale used in connection with Locks, Door Closers, Hoists, Carburetters, Industrial Trucks, etc., is exclusively the property of The Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company.

It is secured to us by common law and trade-mark registry throughout the world, and it cannot lawfully be used on similar products made by others.

It is not the name of an article. It is an abbreviation of our corporate name, and for upwards of fifty years has been used to indicate products of our manufacture.

The name Yale appears on every article we make as a guarantee that we made it.

The Yale & Towne Mfg. Co.

Distributors

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Yale Made is Yale Marked

Feel the weight of it—

COMPARE the solid material and beautiful construction of the Ingersoll Revally Radiolite with the flimsiness of most other Alarm Clocks.

From the handsome polished Nickel Case to the smallest screw, every component of the Ingersoll Revally is made from the best materials, carefully finished, timed and tested with the usual Ingersoll thoroughness.

At your bedside—in the dark—the luminous hands and figures glow brightly and show the time at a glance.

Even the heaviest sleeper will wake at the sound of the pleasant but insistent Alarm.

Sold by high-class Watch dealers everywhere. If any difficulty in obtaining, we will send Clock post free on receipt of price.

INGERSOLL WATCH CO., LTD.,

1, INGERSOLL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2.

Ingersoll

REVALLY RADIOLITE ALARM CLOCK

With Radiolite Dial **30/-** With plain non-luminous Dial **22/6**

Suits by Post

Tested, pure wool cloths and good quality linings and fittings give super-value to "The Lion" Branded Suit Service. Our suits look more gentlemanly and keep "spick and span" longer than many suits costing twice as much. A tailor-made Lounge Suit, to measure, fully guaranteed to satisfy, sent post free for **£4/10**

Test our cloth quality by writing for

100 CLOTH PATTERNS FREE.

They're sent in neat box together with book of styles by eminent London fashion artist, and simple, clear instructions for self-measuring. Each cloth is also priced with the cost per yard. Any length cut.

NO RISK—Misfit Means Money Back. Write for Free Patterns now to—

GROVES & LINDLEY,
Exporters of Cloth and Clothing,
114, THE LION, HUDDERSFIELD.

Evinrude

ON the river, lakes, broads, or sea, the EVINRUDE Detachable Motor is ideal. It can be slipped on to the stern of any rowboat—your own or hired—which at once converts her into a sturdy, reliable little Motor Boat.

It requires no skilled knowledge or attention, and the cost of running is fractional. Your money returned in full if not satisfied.

Write to-day for Catalogue "F" with full particulars and prices.

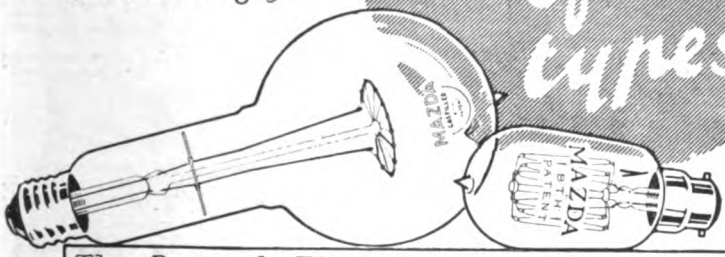
EVINRUDE MOTOR Co ENG. Ltd.
(MANAGER: A. W. BRADBURY)
107 WATERLOO RD. LONDON S.E.1

MAZDA
Drawn Wire
ELECTRIC LAMPS

Made in Rugby

Better Light - Lighter Bills

Reduction of prices of all types



-in certain cases below pre-war level

1503A The British Thomson-Houston Company, Limited
Mazda House, 77, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C 4.

A Better Shoe—Direct to You

By Post, from Barratts, the Makers—on Approval

A better-looking shoe—better in length of smart service—better in genuine all-leather excellence—offered you at practically production costs because made by Barratts in their own model Northampton factory and retailed by them direct by post. Thousands of pairs are now being worn all over the globe, and every post brings repeat orders from Overseas men. This is the shoe for you!

30/-
Direct by Post.
Postage Abroad Extra.

Think over these facts about Footshape Brogue Shoes (Black)

Box Calf uppers—cut from the choicest parts of the hide and with right run of grain—pliable as kid, yet wet-proof and crack-proof. Shoe's back quarters leather-lined, leather stiffened, and moulded to a perfect heel grip. Solid leather insoles and welts flexibly stitched to stout soles of oak-bark tanned English leather, renowned the world over for wet-resistance and wearing quality. Note the graceful Brogue pattern, the neat perforated ornament, and the well-balanced lines of the shoe. Increasingly popular Overseas. **Order No. 1682.**

"Browns" are **37 6.** Only absolutely perfect hides free from the least unevenness are used for these. When ordering "Browns," state No. 1482.

32 Fittings. Sizes are 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Four widths to each size: narrow, medium, wide, extra wide.

Order Now, This Way. Give size and width usually worn, or shape of foot, obtained by running pencil round stockinged foot when standing on paper. For Black Brogue state No. 1682, and enclose money order or cheque for **30/-** (1/- extra for size 12, brown or black). Send 10/- deposit with Cash on Delivery orders from Overseas.

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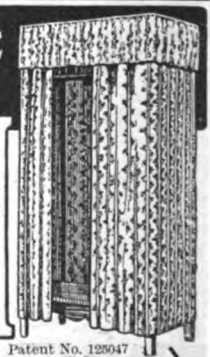

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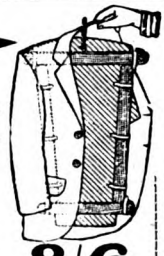

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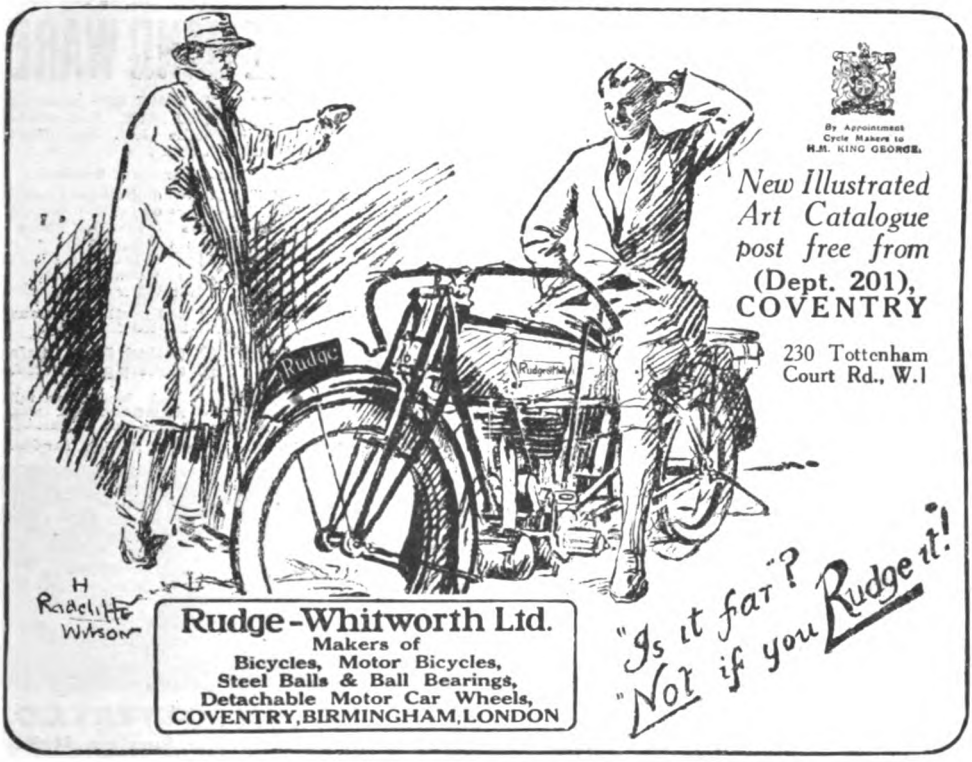

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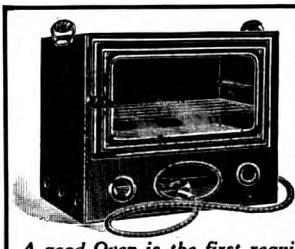

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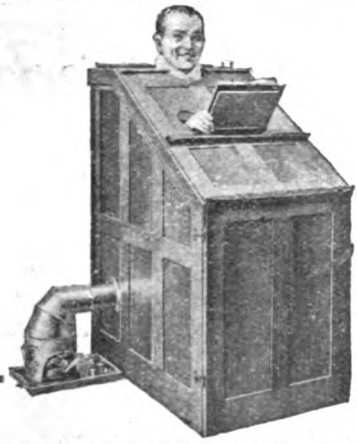

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Feb., 1921.

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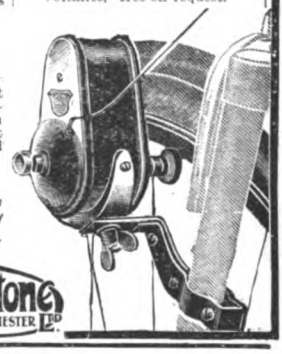

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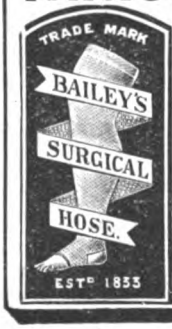

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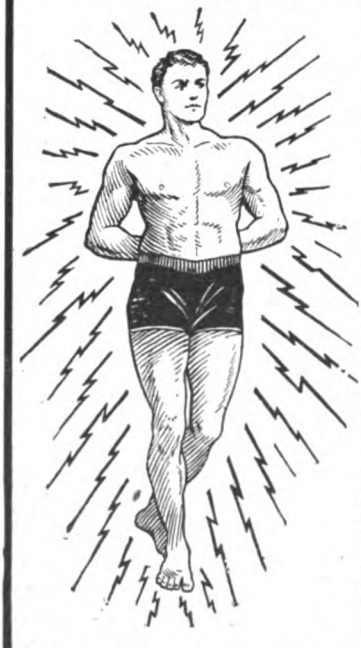

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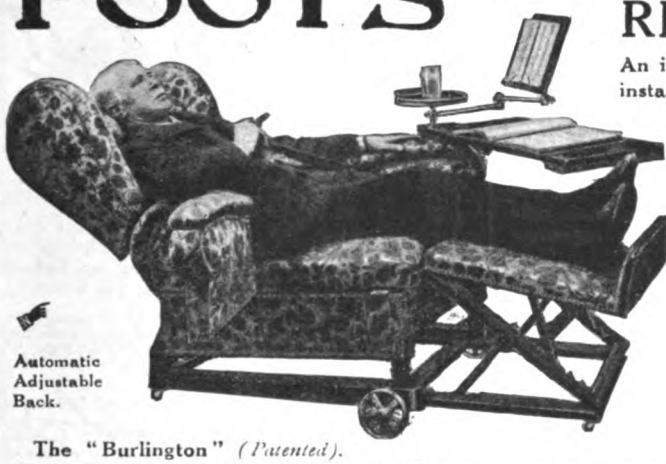

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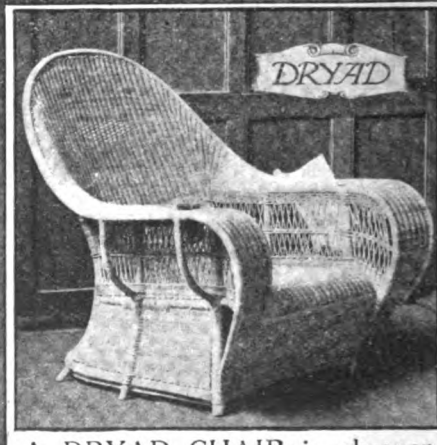

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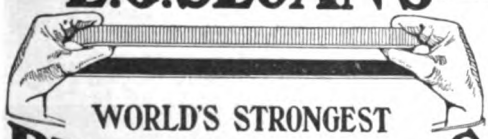

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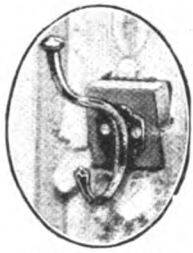

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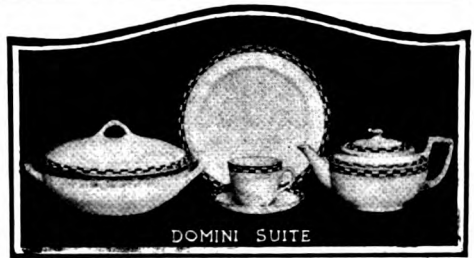

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Contents for May, 1921.

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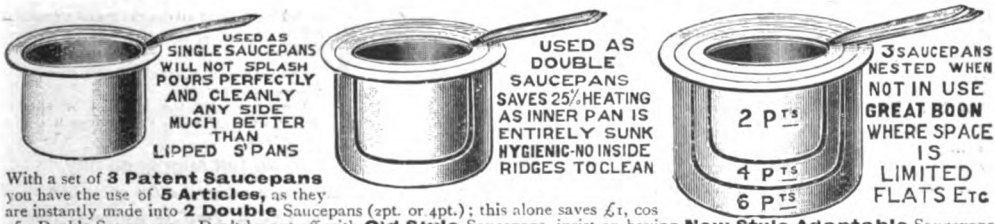

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To face back of Frontispiece.

THE
STRAND
MAGAZINE
May, 1921

"THE BIG 'PLANE FLASHED DOWN AND DOWN IN A TERRIFIC RUSH. THERE WAS A ZIP-ZIP-ZIP IN THE AIR, THE SHARP, THICK NOISE OF BULLETS SLAPPING THROUGH WING FABRIC."

(SEE PAGE 378.)

The Air Trail

by

W. DOUGLAS NEWTON

Illustrated by DUDLEY TENNANT

I.

GEMMA always went down to the aerodrome at that particular time of that particular day of the week. That was her wisdom. It was the earliest working hour of Monday, which is the languid day of the Anglo-Saxon week-end. She did not want to be noticed.

In the mess-lounge she found a very perfectly-creased pair of slacks emerging from a noble arm-chair and the obliterating expanse of a morning paper. Surprising, that, for the aerodrome was mainly deserted at this time. She studied the perfect creases, and the very neat and decorative shoes and the glowing socks appertaining to the creases. She coughed.

The daily paper came down swiftly and the fittingly perfect upper-half of a genial young man with an indolent air was revealed. He studied her with pleasant blue eyes, the intelligence of which was masked in a sunny, social smile. Then he said, with a little too much enthusiasm to be entirely casual and conversational :—

"Hallo, Gemma, old thing, how nicely you do turn up in the last places on earth. Why here and why now at this most raw hour ?"

"Detecting," she said, teasingly. "Outside I saw an unmistakable footprint. 'Bond Street,' said I, 'that peculiar light tread—Raphael Phare, the sleuth, lurks within.' So, I run you to earth."

He grinned, his eyes resting on her.

"I don't like the word 'run' in your story. Here am I sitting behind my barricade of all the sensations, and I hear a casual footfall striding along the passage as—as care free as that of a quite nice little lady of attractive age who is thinking of nothing in particular. Those footfalls turn in at this door. They stop—suddenly. I know that stop—the writer chaps put it down as 'she paused in astonishment.' Those footfalls were taken by surprise at the sight of an unexpected pair of——"

"Oh, you're far too sharp," laughed Gemma. "Well, I was surprised, for—for—what are *you* doing here ?"

He was standing now, tall, slim, but with shoulders neat and of definite power—if one wasn't misled by the gorgeous cut of his suiting. His eyes were upon her with their casual carefulness.

"Me—oh, same as you. I'm here on—business." His eyes seemed to point directly to the very workmanlike aspect of her clothes, the considered warmth and strength of their texture. "Oh, yes, Gemma, business," he finished. "But I didn't know——"

Rapid steps were heard outside the room; a young, thrusting man in leather flying kit hurried in.

"No go, Mr. Phare," he cried. "I've been 'phoning until I'm dizzy, but I can't get anyone. Not a soul."

"You said you were certain of a man,"

said Raphael Phare, and under his smile was a certain steeliness.

"And I would have had him, but the ass has concussion. Went joy-riding yesterday in a car unfit for human transportation, and that's that. I say, *must* you have another man? You've got that policeman fellow."

"He's not a pilot," said Raphael Phare. "I'll want him for land work if we get to that. And I must land safely."

"You think these fellows might pip me?" asked the flying man, but without any great show of anxiety.

"It's a possibility. They're pretty desperate fellows, both of them: they shot up the old jeweller and his assistant, and they know what's due to them when they're caught. And as they are both flying men—Roy Otton, you know, has a pretty good reputation—they'll know who they have to get to put us out of action."

"That's true: they'll go for me," said the pilot, quite calmly. "All the same, Mr. Phare, we really can't get another pilot——"

"Roy Otton!" said Gemma. "That's the aeroplane thief, isn't it, Raphael? The man the morning papers are full of? Are you after him?"

"I'm doomed to get these hustling sort of jobs, old thing, it seems," smiled Raphael. "Only now it isn't a question of a car and a little lady with plenty of grit driving me. It's——"

"Willie Fielding," said Gemma to the pilot, "just tell this ignorant fellow what I can do. I'm getting into my kit now. I'll meet you by the hangars."

"Oh, you can fly as well as drive a car?" said Raphael Phare, in mock despair. "I might have known——" But as Gemma was already out of the room he stopped and glanced at the flying man.

"It's a fact," said the latter. "Miss Bermingham got her certificate over a year ago. She flies here fairly regularly, on Mondays. She's a topping pilot, safe and yet daring, you know. But, I say, on a job like this, a woman, a girl can't—well—run risks."

"And mere men can't prevent a woman, a girl, like Gemma Bermingham running 'em if she means to. You can try if you like. I shall not join you in the endeavour. I consider the expenditure of fruitless effort a sign of inefficiency, and so on."

"But—but this business will require some nerve?"

"That's what Gemma has, some nerve," smiled Raphael.

"I wish to heavens we could find another man."

"I'm with you," said Raphael, "but we can't. And I want that extra pilot. I really do hate making slips in my cases." His smile was genial and easy; the airman found it most difficult to feel that this quite inconsequent and charming man was—well, was a sort of policeman. Raphael ended: "After all, you may not be killed, Willie; it's not an absolute necessity, you know."

"By Jove, no," cried Willie Fielding. "Of course it may not happen, and so it will be all right after all."

"Even if it does," said Raphael, "I think it will be all right after all. You see, I know Gemma."

II.

GEMMA, her delicate and rather fragile little face vital with the glow of excitement, was standing in her leather overalls near the hangars when the two young men went out. Mechanics were about the machine performing the final mysteries of tuning-up. A most obvious policeman, despite his garb of leather, was standing by. His calm was muscular and did not permit the slightest show of emotion. Gemma turned to Raphael, her eyes bright.

"Tell me all about it, Raphael. I've only glanced at the papers. This Roy Otton broke into a jeweller's, didn't he, and stole—how many thousands of pounds of gems?"

"About twenty-five thousand," said Raphael.

"And he shot at the jeweller and his assistant, who live on the premises?"

"The assistant was killed," said Raphael, "and the jeweller will probably die. But make it plural, Gemma. Otton is the leader only, he had one companion at least. There may be more—somewhere."

"There were only two on that 'plane you want me to chase," put in Willie Fielding. "At least, that's what has been reported through to here." Raphael's pleasant eye turned on the boy; there was that under its geniality that made him continue. "We were warned against a landing, you see. It seems two men, as bold as you like, strolled into the Inningham 'drome yesterday afternoon—the burglary was in the morning, Miss Gemma, you see—just after lunch. They took a two-seater in a quite lordly way, and Otton, who was fairly well known to the ground staff, took the controls and flew her off. They headed north, this way. When it got about that Otton had a hand in this jewellery stunt the general warning went out to all the flying grounds—in case they came down."

"How in the name of wonder did they manage to walk off with that 'plane?" asked Gemma.

"Dead easy. The beggars had an order—yes, an order. All O.K., too, down to old Dommit's signature. And Otton was known, you see. And Dommit was away somewhere

snug, considering his lunch. They knew how to bluff all right, all right."

"They evidently know how to plan," added Gemma, as she turned and looked at Raphael.

"Oh, they do," he smiled. He looked at the policeman, he looked at Gemma. "Hence the—er—spare parts, the extra help. We don't quite know what is ahead, what we may have to handle. The whole thing has been a most careful piece of work and we can't take risks, because we don't think Otton is taking any."

"Tell me exactly what happened, Raphael?"

"WELL, they got into the locked shop in a very neat way—in fact they were only surprised just as they were packing up. They shot, and then they managed to get into the street again, into the crowd which had collected at the noise of the firing. He's a real clever fellow, Otton. He and his companion actually went into the premises with the first two policemen who came up. When they found the injured men it was Otton, volunteering to ring up a doctor, who discovered that the telephone had been done in. So he and his pal went off in a taxi for the doctor. The police actually called one for them."

"Why—why did they do so daring a thing?" asked Gemma.

"Oh, clever fellows like Otton sometimes over-do cleverness. There were reasons for boldness, too. First reason was that the police arrived a little too quickly, found them dodging round the stables at the back of the premises—that's the way they got out, and in. To explain their presence Otton said they'd heard shots, and had run round to see if help was needed. After that, of course, they had to join up with the police."

"And the other reason?"

"One of them, Otton perhaps, had left his automatic behind in the hurry of snatching up jewels and stuffing them into pockets and so on. That automatic was undoubtedly direct evidence for condemning the murderer. Otton, or the other, could be traced by the gun-maker's number. They thought only of that and not of anything else. Well, the police were wise up to a point. They found that automatic at once, but beyond that point Otton beat them. He managed to raise such a fuss about the finding of the injured men that the policeman who had picked up the weapon put it down again to lend a hand at first aid. The automatic wasn't missed until they had gone off in that taxi."

"I suppose you come in here, Raphael?"

"Well, I do rather. I happened to be on duty, and the police found a 'phone that did work, so I arrived. It wasn't so difficult to connect up that missing automatic with the kindly strangers. And after that we started tracing that taxi, in fact quite a lot of taxis, for Otton and his friend believe greatly in mobility. 'Fraid we should have been hung up a good deal hadn't Dommit returned from lunch to find one of his pet 'planes gone on an order he'd never signed. That's where we connected up again. The aerodrome description of Otton and his companion fitted the police description of the two Samaritans. But it does show planning, as you say. Otton had that order ready, had Dommit's extensive lunch-hour well timed. And then in a 'plane there would be a clean get-away, no sort of ground trail at all, you understand, with taxi-drivers, railwaymen, and so on to give clues."

"All the same, it does not appear to have been a clean get-away," smiled Gemma. "You're not going up in an aeroplane yourself for nothing, Raphael."

"You wouldn't be so bad in the detecting trade yourself, Gemma," said Raphael. "Well, we are going somewhere into the big belt of moors. Where, exactly, is not revealed, but a pursuing 'plane has advantages, too. One can look down and see things, and a two-seater or a hangar is not easily hidden on a moor."

"If the two-seater remains on the moor," said Gemma. "Has it?"

"It hasn't come out of that belt—as far as information goes. It was seen heading for the moor from the south. There are no reports of any 'plane coming out on the other side—on any side. It took us time to put together the jig-saw of facts and reports, to make certain that it was Otton who had flown into the moor-belt. Dark came before we had all we wanted, or we should have gone after him last night. But people have been alert all round the belt, and nothing has come out and there was no night flying."

"Couldn't Otton have abandoned that 'plane to get out on foot or by car?"

"That's a possibility, but apparently he hasn't done it. There's a cordon round the moor-belt. All roads, tracks, railway stations, and so on have had earnest attention."

Willie Fielding was attacked by a bright idea. "Couldn't the cordon move in? I mean, don't you see, converge on the beggars from exterior lines?"

"It converges, Willie," said Raphael. "Even now it converges nobly. If Otton remains on the ground we should get him. With an aeroplane in hand he probably won't. Also a fact of some significance has come to light. A mysterious motor-lorry bought up an extravagant supply of petrol locally a few days ago. The man on the

lorry would not say what it was for, and he drove into the heart of the moors, and, as the stories go, he and that petrol were never seen again. That may or may not point to further flying on Otton's part. I think it does. For that reason I have commandeered your bus, Willie, to chase him if he gets into the air, as well as to get a bird's-eye view of the moor."

"But, even if he flies, where the deuce will he go, with the whole of the country alert for him?" demanded Willie Fielding.

"Who can say, Willie? As the aphorism has it, 'Not even Mahomet but only Allah knows what is in the mind of Otton.' My own consuming desire is to head him off from the sea, should that be his fancy. To have to hunt him on the Continent would not only be tedious, but the fact that he got there would lessen the natural love the authorities have for me."

"Phew," cried Willie. "Of course, that *would* be his line; fill tanks to capacity and then head out to sea."

"Could he reach the Continent?" asked Gemma.

"Oh, rather, the day and wind and what-not are entirely in his favour."

"Then why are we standing about here giving him a good start?" cried Gemma, femininely. "Your 'plane was ready minutes ago, Willie."

III.

RAPHAEL PHARE suddenly saw, rather than felt, Gemma's small, purposeful hand on his sleeve. Then he became conscious of its pressure. It lifted and waved. It was a gesture that cried, "Look! Look!"

From a study of the moors beneath he directed his glance ahead.

Low, skimming against the trees like some giant dragon-fly and a great distance away, he saw an aeroplane. At the same moment he noticed that Willie's left hand was playing on the controls, and that the engine responded with a more terrific roaring. He knew why. That distant 'plane before them was rising. It had started up like a scared rabbit from some fold in the moor. It had seen them and was running for its life.

It was the first thrill of their flight. They had stepped, bumping softly, off the earth an hour ago under the pull of the roaring engine. They had lilted gently, gently; circled and swayed, the needles in both the altimeter and speed indicator moving along to apparently dizzy heights and dizzying speeds. But Raphael had noticed nothing dizzying at all. And when suddenly all motion appeared to cease, and they halted apparently in an air cave of most terrific tumult, he could almost have declared those needles liars, for there was no more sense of travelling at eighty miles an hour than there was of being up fifteen hundred feet.

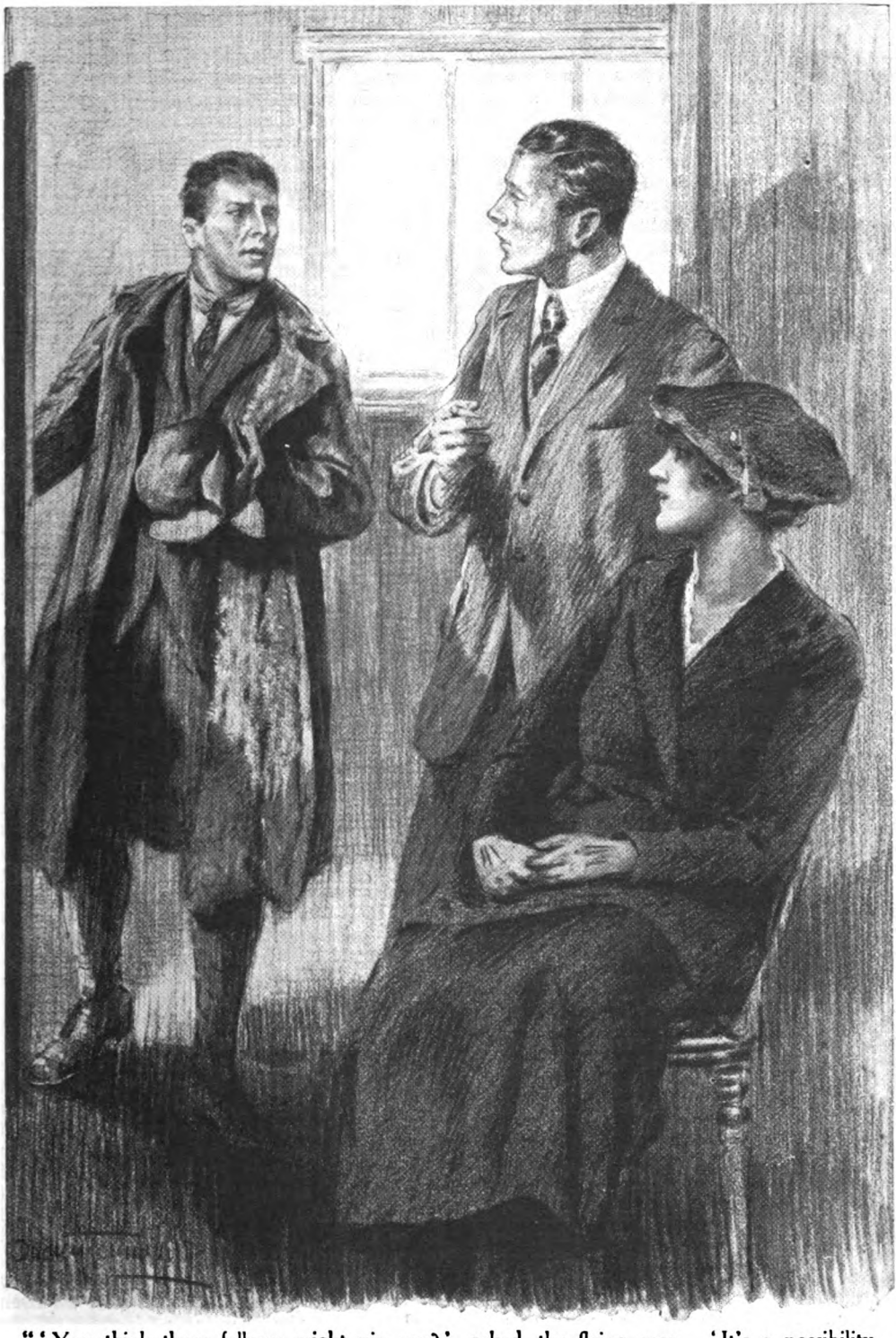
Then he looked over the side of the 'plane and saw the earth beneath him, toy-like and slightly contemptible as though it were a map drawn and coloured by a not too clever cartographer. He saw that this indifferent map was moving away under them. Slowly and evenly it slipped under him, as though someone was rolling it from one roller to another. That was all he saw; unexcitingly, the toy railway tracks and the little toy towns and the pocket-handkerchief fields slid beneath him in the cold chastity of early sunlight that evenly filled the world. The big 'plane had dipped and recovered once in a rather swooping way, but that seemed to be the sum-total of sensation in flying. Almost too soon they were over the wild, rather furry-looking country that was the moor.

Willie banked and straightened, banked and straightened again, swinging his machine in sweeping curves. He was quartering the moor delicately, sifting it finely, so that nothing on its surface could escape. They all stared down, probing every patch of bush, every fold of land beneath. And then Gemma had touched Raphael's arm, and he had looked, and there was the distant, rising 'plane streaking off like a scared rabbit.

Willie was climbing at once, and edging east steadily—east lay the sea. The flying 'plane before them had been growing, growing, growing, like a plant of swift, magical expansion. Suddenly it ceased to spiral. Its tail flicked towards them, amazingly it began to dwindle. Willie, with a lord-of-the-air phlegm, simply did things on the amazing controls before him, the noise of the engine and the air became even less bearable, and the finger on the speed indicator kicked abruptly to a point or two beyond the hundred mark.

The flying two-seater ceased to dwindle. It lost its grey tint. Became blacker, more definite. Raphael darted a fleeting look to the ground, and away on the left he caught sight of a little grouping: something that looked like a shed, another thing was a lorry. There were tiny red squares—motor-spirit tins, a small car, and things with jerky legs—men, two of them. He looked up again, saw a vast faded flat surface that glinted and flashed sleekly. They were edging towards that. It took him some time to realize it was the sea. Ahead there was the two-seater, hanging there in front of them, as though on the end of a thread hitched up to a cloud. Motionless—but so black, so very much larger. He saw a loose, black blob move, a head. Good Lord! They had got as close as that!

It was obvious what the two-seater was at.



"'You think these fellows might pip me?' asked the flying man. 'It's a possibility. They're pretty desperate fellows, both of them.'"

It was edging east, fighting, fighting to get to the sea. Would it? He looked at the imperturbably carven face of the ridiculously young Willie. Willie's face remained imperturbably carven, eyes fixed ahead. Then, as he looked, the gravity collapsed into the smile of a schoolboy, and the lips framed an entirely unheard, "Ah, you begin to understand, hey?" Willie shifted in his seat as feet and hands accomplished intuitive things. The 'plane became breathless with quick, sliding movements.

Raphael Phare looked ahead.

The two-seater had unexpectedly and astonishingly spun round, on its very tail, Phare thought; it swooped and darted, flashed due west away from the sea. It seemed that their own 'plane came round with laborious slowness, for when they were heading west, the two-seater swooped and turned again, span back on its tracks, and rushed towards the sea. Raphael noted that Willie's boyish mouth was smiling and the lips seemed to form the words, "Some bird, Otton." The big 'plane was already banking. Raphael saw Gemma's face, delicate and alive with excitement, and she was smiling, pleased.

Raphael began to recognize that Willie was also "Some bird." His manœuvring seemed more leisurely than the flashing daring of the two-seater, and its very leisureliness was the thing that defeated Otton. Always Willie's slower turn enabled him to cut right across Otton's path just as that hair-brain pilot had decided to whip back on his tracks in a second turn. Willie seemed to have an intuitive sense that enabled him to forestall Otton's movements. Up there in the sky it was rather as though he were a celestial sheep-dog always heading-off the rushes of a rebellious sheep. Always, too, he was cutting down that eastward slide, was forcing Otton more and more over to the west, away from the sea.

They sparred, as it were, for an opening in the sky, then Otton abruptly changed tactics. He turned and went west, he turned and rushed east again. Then, instead of coming round under the threat of their 'plane, he abruptly dipped and dived. He swooped earthward in a terrific volplane, diving as it were straight to destruction.

Willie went after him.

The big 'plane flashed down and down in a steep and terrific switchback rush. The earth came leaping up towards them with an almost awful mobility. Down they went, down—and they flattened. Otton had flattened before them. They were skimming the earth at a few hundred feet. Bushes and rock and the green of the grass went by in a blur. There was a flash of whiteness, and of painted things. Then the thing happened.

There was a zip-zip-zip all about them in the air. Something "spanged" on metal, there was the sharp, thick noise of bullets slapping through wing fabric. Willie's face suddenly twisted awry, a red weal leaped out over his cheek-bone and temple. The big 'plane was rocking—rocking——

IV.

RAPHAEL PHARE was already firing back.

That flash of white had given him an instant warning; his pistol being already in his hand, almost instinctively his arm was over the 'plane, he was swivelling back, was firing at the tent and the lorry and the small car and the two men who stood by these things and fired up. He had realized in that moment of a moment what had happened. Otton had lured them to within pistol range of his camp. Baffled in his attempt to force a way out to sea, he had dived and brought his pursuers low down over his two confederates.

They had opened fire. Raphael Phare fired back. He didn't expect to hit, but what he expected happened. One of the two rogues scrambled for shelter under the lorry. The other ducked. And they were by.

The 'plane was rocking—rocking. Raphael knew nothing about flying, so to him this rocking seemed even more dangerous than it was. He glanced at Willie's face. The wry twist had left it, but the weal had become a ribbon of bright blood. The pale lips, however, were clenched tight, and Willie was imperturbably graven once more. He was looking ahead. The earth swept from under them, and the world became all sky—a shining blue sky with a few ridiculous clouds dappling it. They pushed up to this sky, steeply, almost violently, until Raphael Phare felt that if he did not cling to the sides of the machine he must fall, waggling his legs idiotically, through miles and miles of space.

He tried to look down, but his neck seemed unable to act. He simply lolled back looking at sky. He wondered if Willie were dead, or gone mad. Gemma didn't think so. Her exquisite little face was quite calm, the vivid lips a little open, a half-smile glowing in her eyes. She seemed to recognize that what was being accomplished was according to the book. Raphael Phare lolled back and surrendered himself to unlimited sky. It was a blank sky. Not even birds appeared to be in it. The two-seater was gone. It had apparently vanished for ever.

With another dizzying transition they were flying level again, hurling on an even keel through the illimitable blueness of the world. Raphael looked ahead and around—nothing—not a sign of that two-seater.

It was nowhere. It had given them the slip while they wrestled with that critical incident. Gemma's hand, that neat, pretty, and yet determined little hand, was on his arm again, he saw her smiling with her teasing smile into his face. Her free hand pointed forward and down.

Down—right away down below them, so far down that it appeared on the ground, he saw the two-seater. It was not like a dragon-fly now, for he saw the whole of its spread from above. It was like some big bird skimming the earth. There it was, darting like a swallow towards the sea.

And it was painfully near the sea. It was far away, an immense distance away. It had leapt forward terrifically. What had held them back—the climb, the moments lost in the flurry of that incident? He did not know, but the gap between them dismayed him. That two-seater would get away, Otton would get away.

Gemma was giving him that teasing smile of hers. The rueful look that, for the moment, had crept into his habitually-indolent geniality amused her. Her lips were framing, " No ! No ! Don't be down-hearted." Then she pulled a pad, that was hanging on a cord, on to her knees, and with the pencil that hung by the pad she was writing. In a moment Raphael was reading a scrawled—

" It's all right. Watch Willie. Willie can deliver the goods."

He looked at Willie, and thought that his pallor had increased. He wrote in turn :—

" Willie is great, but can he hold out ? "

Gemma patted the controls before her, after she had read. She smiled. Her lips framed, " Standing by."

Then Raphael's heart came up into his mouth.

They were swooping.

As a sensation it was ghastly. They seemed to be charging straight to the very ground. They shot down and down and down on a terrible dropping line. Raphael felt he knew exactly what a falling rocket-stick must feel like if it resented its job of returning to earth. Not merely his breath but every organ in his body seemed to be pressed back against his spine with the appalling pressure of that flashing descent. He shut his eyes and hung on like grim death—not because that mattered, but because it gave just one grain of comfort in a most uncomfortable and abominable moment.

But he had to open his eyes, just to see how he was going to be killed. Earth and sea and bushes and trees seemed to be coming up at him in a roar. The two-seater was shooting nearer to them at a sickening pace. Curious how that two-seater leapt towards them, though of course it was actually streaking off as hard as it could go. Its spread of wing rushed up, growing enormous. In a second they would crash. He heard a faint " spat-spat " by his head, in the flicker of an instant saw a thin veil of cordite vapour that was immediately snatched away. He realized that this tremendous instant had been the stoic policeman's moment. Through the enormity of the thrill the policeman had remained true to pattern. He was indubitably stoic, and he shot. Sedately, as though on a range, he was potting at the two-seater.

Then the two-seater seemed to stagger a little, but it immediately flattened to steadiness, and a moment later it was banking away inland. It was their triumph. Willie had delivered the goods. In that wild hurdler's leap across the sky he had caught Otton in a single bound. He was up with the flying-thief once more, and, with his superior speed, was master of him.

They flattened, too, and banked steadily, coldly, even as Otton banked. They swayed dizzily ; as they flicked straight both machines in a breathless moment were roaring level. Raphael was firing, as the stoic policeman was firing. From the fuselage of the two-seater he saw the stab of pistol discharges. He emptied his magazine ; Gemma thrust the handle of another pistol into his grasp. Half-way through the clip of that, Otton swung into another turn.

Raphael almost shouted at the slowness of their own turn. He jerked about to signal swiftness to Willie.

Willie had sagged sideways. He was hanging limp, helpless—lifeless, perhaps—from his straps.

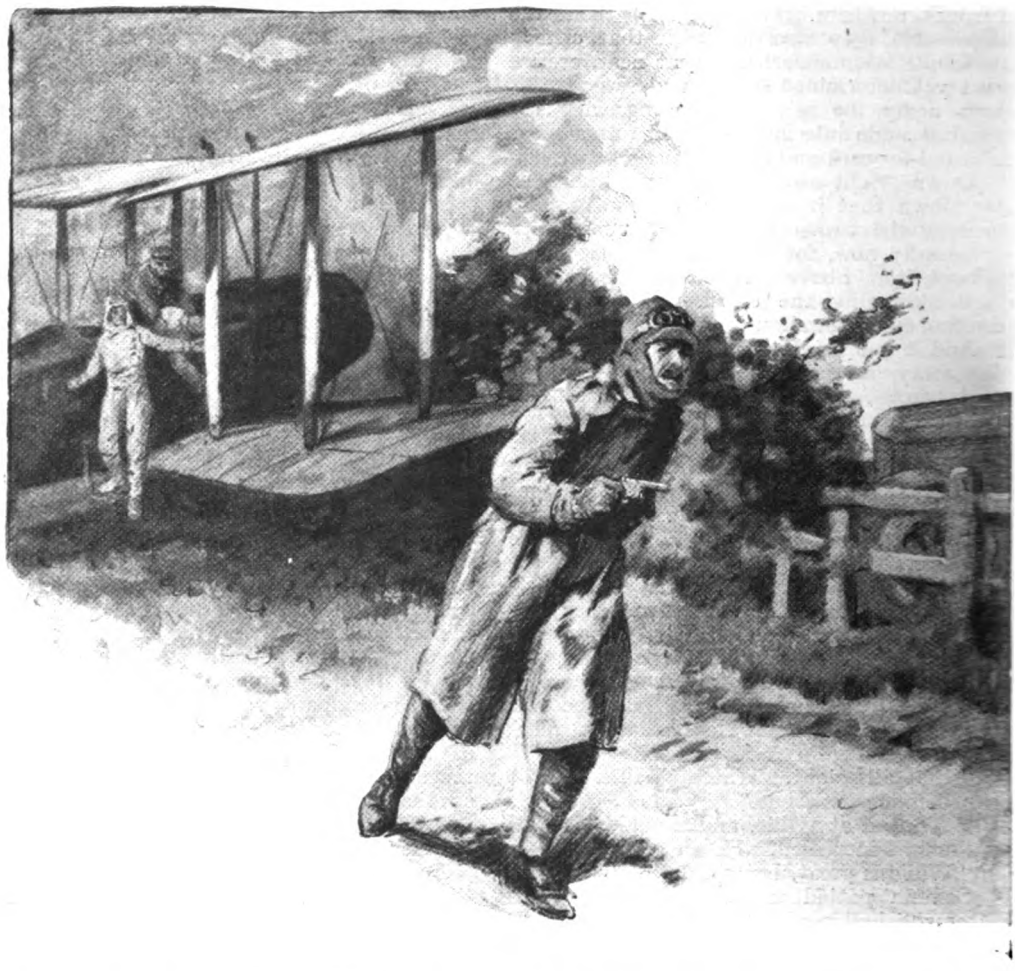
V.

RAPHAEL started up, horrified at the limpness of Willie. Two thoughts seemed in a most confusing way to be shouting in his head. The first was that Willie out of action meant Otton would escape. The second that Willie out of action meant a crash and a violent death. He did not know which thought was the most awful. Then, as he stood, he found himself heeling over in his own straps, heeling gently.

He sat abruptly in his wicker seat. He instinctively understood what was happening. The great 'plane was banking smoothly and lyrically.

Gemma was in control.

He saw her, the half-smile gone from her vivid little face, a look extraordinarily akin to the sculptured imperturbability of Willie sitting gravely upon her vital youth. And she was master. The 'plane came round



with the lithe swiftness of a coursing greyhound. It was hanging on grimly, tenaciously, to the fleeing two-seater.

"Reliable old thing, Gemma!" shouted Raphael. He gave his attention to Otton's 'plane. They were just behind it and well above it. He could see the pilot sitting with a curiously aloof immobility, unconcerned with anything outside handling his 'bus—that was Otton. A pair of thick shoulders under a blobby head bunched and twisted round to them. Something flashed and flashed. There was a quick, sharp scream by Raphael's head. Something thrummed in the structure of the 'plane as a bullet touched. Raphael sighted fine and fired. He fired once—twice.

The thick shoulders abruptly opened; two arms were flung out in a curiously stagy gesture of abandon. A small, glittering thing went falling, falling, through the bright air—that was the pistol. Then the stocky shoulders drew together, collapsed; they seemed to fall down into the two-seater, out of sight.

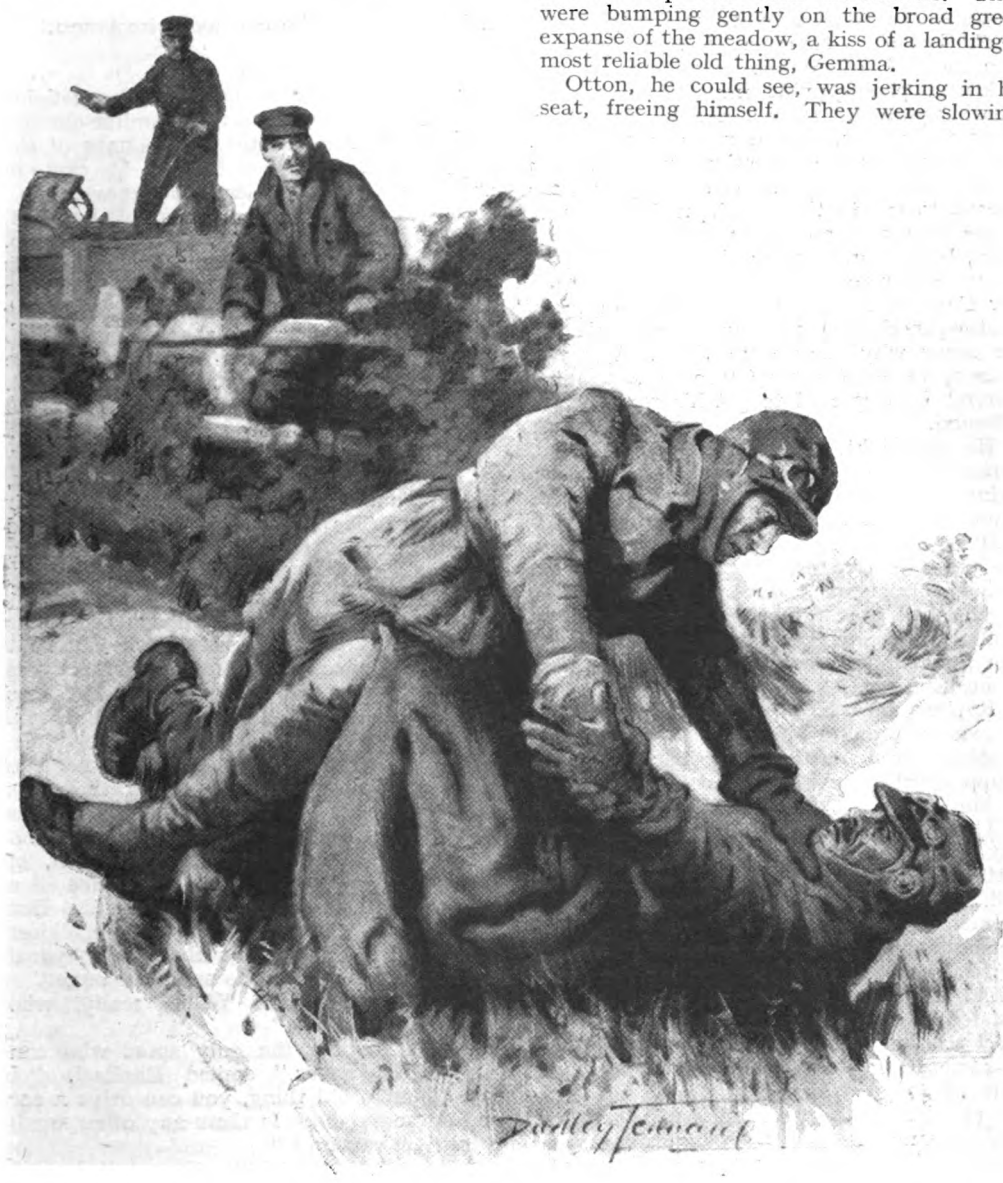
The pilot's head jerked round and back. Suddenly the two-seater vanished from sight. What had happened Raphael did not know. He seemed himself to be caught up in a chaos of dippings, slidings—long, slithering, organ-disturbing drops. The world, when he caught glimpses of it, was spinning dizzily. But throughout this chaos he had a sense of security, he had the feeling that Gemma was in complete and assured control of these ridiculous and dangerous twirlings. He could see her, calm, vivid, radiant, as the sun touched the eloquent delicacy of her features. It was as though she were some goddess, some elemental of the air reigning supreme in her own element.

In the abrupt way of these air manœuvres he saw the two-seater again. He saw it dark-marked and dramatic against a great

square of a meadow. It was plunging for that meadow and so were they. Otton was pancaking to make a swift landing. So were they. The field enlarged monstrously under their eyes. It rushed at them perilously. Otton suddenly went ahead with a smooth and flowing. And then Otton was bumping gently, gently, on the ground.

Raphael was already snapping free the buckles of the straps that bound him. He realized by his movements that the stoic policeman was doing the same. Both slipped a fresh clip into their automatics. They were bumping gently on the broad green expanse of the meadow, a kiss of a landing—most reliable old thing, Gemma.

Otton, he could see, was jerking in his seat, freeing himself. They were slowing.



" Otton tried to shoot. A pair of surprisingly sinewy arms were about his knees, and he hit the grass with an appalling bump. Then a body that seemed made of steel was on him."

sleek, swift movement, and, as though actuated by the same lever, their own movement ceased to be perilous, became

The stoic policeman was already poised to drop from the 'plane. They slowed. The policeman sprang outward, hit the ground,

staggered, fell, and was up and running to the two-seater. Otton was already out of it. He ran and turned and fired three vicious shots at the running policeman, realized that that would not disturb the stoic fellow unless a bullet got home, and turned and ran again.

Raphael was already out of the 'plane on the other side, running. His method was the method of Willie. He had already taken a photographic impression of their landing-ground. It was a field well away from the moors. By it ran a broad road. On the road were several motor-cars. He understood what was Otton's plan. He meant to get to that road, hold up one of those cars, and go off in it. A desperate plan, but Otton was in a desperate position. More desperate than he imagined, indeed, for Raphael Phare had seen more of those motor-cars than the thief and murderer had—he knew why they were there. For this reason, he went after Otton in a cunning curve; he expected to get his man on the rebound.

He was right. Otton reached the fence, scrambled on to it; his hand went out, firing at the nearest motor-car. That motor-car was already coming to a standstill. To Otton's astonishment and dismay, instead of surrendering it snapped back at him with the fire of several pistols. Even as the men in it fired they leapt on to the road. Otton saw their uniforms, turned, and ran for an angle of the field where a mass of bushes promised cover.

Raphael met him as planned. Even as he whipped round and doubled to the left, Raphael was cutting his path. Otton stopped, yelled, and fired, and Raphael dived at him.

The casual young man with the perfectly-cut suitings was lunging-in like a footballer. Otton tried to shorten his arm to shoot and kill. A pair of surprisingly sinewy arms were about his knees. He was going up, up; he shot across the neat expanse of Raphael's perfectly-garbed back, and he hit the grass with an appalling bump. Then as he twisted to rise, a body that seemed made of steel was on him, a leg was across his chest in some strange and commanding hold. A pair of firm, strong hands were gripping his pistol arm; he wrestled, and shot once, and screamed, a pang of exquisite agony darting through his forearm as Raphael's twisting hold did its work. Otton dropped his pistol, writhed—and then was jerked to his feet by what seemed a multitude of rough hands. He was standing in the centre of a group of policemen, and a smiling, indolent, socially-exquisite young man was saying:—

"That's the man wanted for the jewel affair, inspector. Look after him solidly; he's a fellow of the real live-wire brand."

VI.

GEMMA, out of her flying kit, but delightful in her neat and workmanlike clothes, was waiting in the mess-lounge of the aerodrome for Raphael Phare. He came in as indolently and as pleasantly as ever.

"Willie's all right, Gemma," he said. "That was a nasty slap he got on the temple. He should have taken the count—as he calls it—then. But he was so mad with the Otton outfit for tricking him into flying over that encampment that he meant to get even. He held himself in hand until he was even, or nearly so, and then he fainted. Now he's sitting up, feeling that life is all very good and humorous."

"And Otton, and his companion?"

"Otton is where he ought to be. Yes, he's the man who pulled off that jewel affair all right. The other one—well, I'm afraid my chance shot from the 'plane got him. He's finished."

"And the encampment?"

"It was converged upon, as Willie suggested it ought to be. I've had that over the 'phone. Both men and their cars and their tent are in our hands. Seems Otton had planned everything long and well. He stole that 'plane according to schedule, and flew off into the wilds of the moor to his petrol dump. He hoped to throw us off his real plan, as well as fill up his tanks this way. He meant to sneak off early and fly across to the Continent—and then, of course, it would have been the deuce of a job to locate him again, if we ever did. But thanks to the foresight of quite the pluckiest little girl turning up at the psychological moment we were able to spoil his game."

"Oh, well, it was Willie, really, who delivered the goods."

"Willie is not the only sport who can deliver the goods," smiled Raphael. "I say, Gemma, old thing, you can drive a car and an aeroplane. Is there any other small thing you can do?"

"Rather, Raphael!" she smiled. "I can do with lunch. Come along, I'll drive you to that, too."

My Life of Song

by

TETRAZZINI

II.

LONDON—AND PATTI.

AND now came the event to which I had been looking forward from the days when I was a tiny girl gladdening my mother's heart as I sang the operas while sweeping the stairs in my Florentine home. London called!

When I arrived at Covent Garden for the first time the company was assembled for a rehearsal of "Traviata" and all was ready for me to join them. I was shown into a very pleasing dressing-room, and then the other members of the company were introduced to me. I could tell from their greeting that the name of Tetrazzini was not very well known to them. However, the rehearsal began, and I soon realized that I had been surrounded by a very fine company. As we sang I noticed the entrance of a very tall gentleman, who seemed at first to be taking very little interest in the proceedings. When my arias came along, however, I noticed that he gave a quick movement of his head. It may have been surprise or appreciation; or both. During the interval he hurried to my side, and I then discovered that he was Mr. Higgins, Covent Garden's well-known managing director, who had engaged me. Englishmen do not develop such enthusiasm as the Italians or the French, as I well knew. But I could see that the manager was literally enraptured with my effort; he shook my hand and congratulated me whole-heartedly. "Your singing is nothing short of marvellous, Signora Tetrazzini," he exclaimed. The others in the chief *rôles* were similarly enthusiastic, and I would like to put on record how much I appreciated the disinterested approbation of all my colleagues at a time which was the most critical of my life of song. As for the orchestra, every member seemed to have lost his head. *Prime donne* are not usually heroines to their own instrumentalists; yet the Covent Garden orchestra made a heroine of me during that first rehearsal. How shall I describe the scene? At the conclusion of the first act they dropped their instruments and clapped and cheered me for several minutes. I had a fleeting suspicion that prior to my arrival my brother-in-law, Signor Campanini, the conductor, had organized this outburst to hearten me for the coming *début*, but that was soon dissipated by the hearty nature of the applause and the obvious delight of all the musicians. And so it came about that my first response to a Covent Garden ovation was when I bowed my acknowledgments to those good-natured instrumentalists.

I went back to my hotel in a happy mood. "I have astonished the manager, the other singers, and the orchestra," I told myself. "Now you must astonish the London public."

As the hour fixed for my London *début* drew near I sat alone in my hotel apartments musing over the wonderful things that had happened to me in the past through my gift of song, and building little castles in the air for my future. I was feeling more nervous than I had ever felt, and I fervently wished that the nerve-trying ordeal was over.

THE SEERESS OF MILAN.

AS we sat at tea that afternoon, one of our party, seeking to encourage me, declared that to-morrow all London would be talking of me. "Perhaps," I replied, "but what will they be saying? Will they accept me, or will they say that

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the old Italian school and its modern *coloratura* interpreter is not wanted here?" "Oh, don't be pessimistic, signora," was the reply. "Remember the words of the Seeress of Milan."

The Seeress of Milan, whose name was thus brought into the conversation, was certainly an extraordinary woman, if only a tenth of the stories told of her predictions were true. Palmists are in great favour in many enlightened countries. In England, where the practice of their arts is contrary to the law of the country, they are, nevertheless, consulted by all grades of society. Many English women of my acquaintance make a practice of visiting a palmist, a crystal gazer, or a woman of this type at least once a month. That these women find it profitable to dispense flattery is well known; those who paint the rosiest futures for their clients, it is said, have the largest *clientèle*.

I have only once consulted one of these visionaries, and am unable to say whether her statements to me were similar to those she had made to any other person. But I do know that they were different from what were made to those friends of mine who had consulted her. It was not long before my London *début* that I saw this remarkable person in her "witch's den" in Milan. No one knew of my projected visit, and I took every precaution to disguise my identity. From the wardrobe of one of my domestics I borrowed some clothing, which, when I had donned it, gave me the appearance of a very poor woman of the lower classes.

I put a tattered shawl over my hair and I wore a pair of blue cracked spectacles to help to hide my features. Before leaving my home I walked into the garden to see the effect of my make-up on the gardener. He demanded to know what I was doing there, informed me in no uncertain language that I was trespassing on private ground, and ordered me off my own premises. Obeying his orders I walked out of my garden gate and made my way in the direction of the den of the Milan Seeress, feeling well assured that if my own gardener did not recognize me there was little danger of my identity being discovered by the woman on whom I was about to call.

The house in which the prophetess resided was in a low quarter of the town. From the exterior it looked dark and weird and forbidding; when inside, I found myself comparing it with the assassin's den in "Rigoletto." It seemed to me then that it was a good thing for my personal safety that I had not come to this quarter well dressed. At first my hostess, a feeble old woman with white hair and a voice which suggested the croak of a jackdaw, was inclined to the view that I was a business woman, disguised. She could tell by my white hands that I was not used to long hours of rough manual work, although I do a good deal of my own housework. She produced a well-worn pack of greasy cards, made various mysterious signs over them, commanding me to shuffle and cut a number of times, and then disclosed my future. From beginning to end she spoke of me and my doings in the superlative. If, she said, I were a business woman, I should be the most successful business woman living; if I were a poetess, I should become the most famous writer of poems of my time; if a writer, the leading writer; if an actress or a singer, the principal actress or singer in the world. Her insistence in speaking of me in the superlative amused me, and I laughed incredulously as she spoke. But the "Seeress" insisted that she spoke only truth, as time, she said, would show. Then she foreshadowed some long journeys for me across the Atlantic. I was to go to New York, where I should create a great sensation, and should go from there all over the American continent, and continue to be acclaimed by all who heard me. But before then I was to receive an offer to visit London. When that offer came, said she, I must accept it, irrespective of my first impressions and the attractiveness of the proposal. When I had accepted it, she said, I should have another offer, which I must refuse, for great things awaited me in England's capital. My name would be on every lip, crowds would throng to where I was. "But where shall I be?" I broke in. "If, as you say, I am a business woman, why should crowds come to see a business woman?" "You have very good business ability," was the ready answer, "but you are not a business woman. You are in a profession, and I believe you are a singer. If so, you must continue to sing, for you are destined to be one of the great singers of the century."

THEN she took an egg and broke it: the yolk she took for herself; the white she put into a glass. In the albumen she professed to discover myself and my rivals and, pointing to me, declared: "You will triumph over them all. Enemies you have had, and you will have more, but no one will be able to hurt you."

I did not tell the Seeress who I was, but when I left I presented her with fifty francs. As she took the money, her face lighted up and she exclaimed: "I was right. I knew you were not a poor woman, although you come to me in poor raiment. Will you please write to me and tell me all about your

" Will you please write to me and tell me all about your triumphs when what I have forecasted for you comes true, as it will ? "

triumphs when what I have forecasted for you comes true, as it will ? "

On the whole the experience was both interesting and amusing, although I did not attach much importance to it. And I only mention it here because the forecast of this woman was, in a measure, correct.

MY LONDON DÉBUT.

SATURDAY evening, November 2nd, 1907, came, and I, still in a state of nervous excitement, arrived at Covent Garden to make my bow to London.

" It is Saturday night. The house should be full. Is it ? " I inquired of one of the company. " Oh, yes, signora," said he. " They are turning people away." As he spoke he laughed, and his laugh was echoed by others in the company. I went to the curtain, and, drawing it slightly aside, surveyed the great, gloomy-looking auditorium. It seemed empty. " Where are the people ? " I asked, this time speaking to one of the directors who stood by. " Don't be agitated, signora," he answered. " The house is full. You cannot see the people because of the fog."

It was quite true that London was in the grip of the fog-fiend. My cab had to crawl through the swirling yellow stuff as we travelled to the theatre, and some of the fog had flowed into the auditorium from the street, making it almost impossible to see across the great building. Nevertheless, I

knew that the authorities were only attempting to minimize the disappointment which I should feel when I realized that I was singing to a poor house.

The theatre was not full. Far from it. Although it was Saturday, the best day of the week for theatres, there were only a few people in the stalls; about two boxes were occupied; the cheaper parts were about half-full. And this was the best audience that all London could produce to hear a new singer. I heard subsequently that the takings were not sufficient to pay my salary for the night—£120. Evidently London *did not like* old Italian opera, particularly Verdi's "Traviata." Fog and a poor house on the best night of the week! Truly, grand opera was in a bad way in London.

We started. Signor Panizza was the conductor, and my colleagues in the principal *rôles* were the great Sammarco as the principal baritone, and Signor Carpi as the tenor. Hesitant and nervous though I was at the start, I sang and acted to the maximum of my powers. Even in this handful of people I thought there must be some who could appreciate my efforts. All the skill, all the arts I possessed, I brought into full play. Soon that handful of people began to respond. As I felt them stirring, I found my task easier; my voice seemed to get the notes with less effort. I was acting with greater freedom and more naturally. In fact, I was losing that foolish supersensitiveness and was conscious only of the part. When, as I knew by experience, I could feel thus, I knew that all was well. And so it was. At the end of the first act I knew that I had conquered London.

In all parts of the house there was intense excitement during the second and third acts. It grew until the performance ended with a tornado of applause so loud and sustained that it might have been produced by a crowded house on a gala night. More congratulations from everyone behind the scenes followed, and then I was in my cab crawling back through the fog to my hotel.

FIRST FRUITS OF FAME.

OH, the excitement of those next few days! When I alighted from the Continental train a week before, none in England seemed to know of my existence; none called, and few thought it worth while to book seats to hear me sing. Now, what a change! I was no longer a stranger in a strange and chilly land. My quarters at the hotel were no longer oppressively, almost ominously, dull and silent. Indeed, I found that I had been transferred to the other extreme.

Persons of whom I had never heard, representing concerns of which I knew little or nothing, crowded in on me at all times of the day and night. The newspapers sent their representatives, who came along to my hotel in dozens.

One of the journalists was very anxious for me to describe how it felt to become famous in a night. I showed him a photograph of myself at a great bull-fight in Mexico City, receiving from the toreador the honours of the kill. I also showed him a picture of some of the frenzied crowds who had acclaimed my voice in South America, and some press cuttings describing my *début* before the Italian Royal Family at Rome many years ago.

"It is so long since I was made famous in a night that I almost forget what it feels like," I said to him. But he was not to be put off in that way.

"Ah, signora, you do not quite understand," he persisted. "Newspapers have to give the public what they want to read; otherwise they won't read them. Now, the British public love to read about somebody who was a nobody suddenly becoming a great personage. If you can give me something which will contrast your past life of obscurity with your present popularity, it will make very interesting reading. For instance, cannot you tell me a story of how you once tried to obtain a post in the chorus of Covent Garden, and how the authorities there would not offer you a position, with the result that you went away sick at heart to return later a great *prima donna*, with all London at your feet?"

"I WANT A KIND OF CINDERELLA STORY."

"I AM very sorry that I cannot oblige you," I replied, "but I was never in a chorus. You see, I began to sing as a *prima donna*." But the journalist would have none of my successes. "It is your failures that I want to hear about, signora, not your successes. I want to write something which shall be the opposite of your great success of last night. I want a kind of Cinderella story about you: one night a beggar maid and the next night the belle of the ball betrothed to the Prince."

"Unfortunately I have had no failures," I answered, speaking somewhat sorrowfully, for by now I was so amused at his quaint request that I felt no resentment at his desire to liken me to a beggar girl. I searched my memory to see if I could find some unfortunate circumstance in my life which would help him. "You see," I went on, apologetically, "I did not happen to be born in a family which was starving. I have never yet been forced to go hungry. I have not ——"

"Have you never been what we call

'broke'?" he interpolated. "Have you ever had to sing in the streets?"

"Yes, I have done that."

At this my inquisitor's eyes lighted up. "That is what I have been wanting to find out. I knew you would be able to tell me a good story if I questioned you sufficiently."

With that he hastily took out his note-book and prepared to write all that I had to say about my singing in the street. "Where did it happen? How old were you? Did you take up your own collection?" were some of the questions that this young enthusiast fired at me.

"It happened in a number of places," I answered. "Once in San Francisco. That was last year. The townsfolk took up the collection for a local charity. We had nearly a quarter of a million persons present and a very large sum of money was collected—many thousands of pounds—and——"

But the journalist had stopped writing. "No, no, signora," he protested. "Not that. Not a great concert at which thousands were present. But an ordinary street entertainment, one which you had to give to get a few shillings to pay for your night's lodging. As you sang, someone who heard your voice came up to you and said that one day you would become a great singer—and gave you twopence! Now the day has arrived. Something in that vein!"

I shall never forget the doleful expression on the face of that young journalist as he went out without the article for which he came. He said that his editor had told him before he came that he was to get that particular kind of interview with me—and no other! I sent out the next day for a copy of the journal for which he wrote, being curious to know what he would tell his readers about me. I will not mention the name of that newspaper—it has a large circulation—but I must state that in my opinion the writer of the article concerning myself displayed a much too vivid imagination. The journalist was obviously more alarmed at the possible wrath of his editor than at the prospect of hurting my feelings. For he pictured me, prior to my arrival in London, as almost one of the submerged tenth.

Tetrazzini singing to nearly a quarter of a million people in the open air at San Francisco.

I RECEIVED many invitations at this time to be a guest or to sing at West-end parties, some of which I accepted, and soon I began to know the West-end of London and many of its titled and distinguished residents. I remember one afternoon being driven past Covent Garden when I saw a long line of people waiting in a queue. Some were seated on folding chairs which they had brought with them from their homes.

"Look, signora! All these people are waiting to hear you sing to-night! Some have been here since dawn this morning." It was my friend who spoke. The sight astonished me, for it was then no later than two-thirty. I felt very sorry for the poor people who had to wait all that time to hear me sing. But I also felt very happy that I had been able to arouse such enthusiasm in phlegmatic London.

"This is what used to happen in the days of Jenny Lind and when Patti first began to sing at Covent Garden," my companion, a veteran opera-goer, explained.

"It makes me feel so happy," I replied, "that I feel I should like to sing to this queue from the cab window."

With that I made a motion to pull down the window and stop the cab. At this my friend laid a restraining hand on my arm.

"Surely, Tetrazzini, you know better than that!" she exclaimed. "If you were to do that here in the London streets you would be mobbed. Remember what happened to Patti when she was mobbed by her admirers in the streets of London and had to seek refuge in a strange house. The shock of the incident had prevented her from singing for several days. don't demonstrate in the streets, I am told," was my reply. Then my friend told me the story of how on one occasion

"It was not until a few minutes before the curtain rose that someone hurried to my dressing-

you in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires. These people would enjoy one song, but they would surround the cab and want souvenirs and demand to shake hands. By the time you could free yourself, you would feel unfit for singing again to-night. You must also remember that you have only appeared once; it would never do for you to make a bad impression inside the house on your second appearance."

"But these are English people: they

Though I would have enjoyed giving Londoners an impromptu concert in the open air, I took my friend's advice and held myself in reserve for the evening's performance.

On my return to my hotel I learned that all the seats for this my second performance had been sold out early on the previous Monday morning, and that wealthy people were offering fancy prices to the fortunate ticket-holders to part with their seats. One enterprising concert agency had attempted

to purchase outright from Covent Garden all the seating accommodation for my remaining eight performances. The evening newspaper which was brought up to me at tea-time contained a long description of the scenes at the opera-house. Such scenes, it said, had not been witnessed at an ordinary perfor-

room exclaiming: 'Signora Patti's here!'"

mance at Covent Garden for a generation. Though I had achieved success on the first night, this description of what was happening in and around the opera-house slightly unnerved me for my second appearance. But something was to happen at Covent Garden that night which, had I read of it beforehand, would have unnerved me still more and probably have prevented me from appearing at all.

One of the myriads of newspaper readers who saw me described as "the New Patti" was the great Patti herself.

SINGING TO PATTI.

SHE was too great to harbour any petty jealousy when she read, at her breakfast-table in the Welsh mountains, the glowing descriptions of my London *début*. She immediately decided to hasten to London to hear for herself if what the critics said was true. Of course, I had no knowledge that she intended to be present at Covent Garden on that particular evening. It was not until a few minutes before the curtain rose that someone hurried to my dressing-room exclaiming: "Signora Patti's here!" In my excitement I sprang to my feet, with the result that my hair, which my maid was in the act of adjusting, was badly disarranged.

"Are you sure?" I asked, incredulously.

"Yes, signora, quite sure. We all know Patti at Covent Garden. She is in the second row of the stalls."

My informant pointed out the exact position so that I should have no difficulty in discovering Patti as I went on. To describe my feelings at that moment is almost impossible. My heart sank. For the moment I seemed to lose control of my body. "Oh, I cannot sing to Patti!" I exclaimed. "It would be too presumptuous."

My sensations on entering that night were such as I do not wish ever to repeat. It was difficult on the previous Saturday when I made my first bow to London in a theatre a quarter full. It was far worse on this, the second night. "Everybody has called me 'the New Patti,' and half London has tried to gain admission to-night to see and hear for themselves. Added to that, Patti herself is in the stalls. And I have to prove to London and to Patti that what has been said of me is true. I cannot do it!"

Such were my thoughts and utterances as I was about to go on. The next day the newspapers stated that I seemed to be overnervous during the first few minutes. Can it be doubted? Does anyone express surprise that it was so? Who would not have felt nervous and even abashed in those jumpy circumstances? The house was crowded in every part; extra stalls had been introduced to the front of the house, and at the back of the amphitheatre and of all the other sections was a dense crowd of persons who seemed content to stand throughout the whole performance. What a change from the frigid scene which had met my eyes when I first "walked on" only a few nights before!

I was pleased to observe so many persons representative of rank, fashion, and wealth. But there was one person who to me was of more interest than all the English nobility.

She who had thrilled two generations from the boards of Covent Garden was present to hear me sing. During the storm of applause which greeted my appearance I had only eyes for her. Would she bow to me? Would she give me any encouragement, I wondered? I saw her immediately I entered. No one who had seen a photograph of Patti could mistake that slight charming figure attired in an exquisite evening dress which became her admirably. Her eyes, dark, beautiful, and kindly, met mine. I bowed, and she replied with a pretty little bow and the sweetest smile that I have ever seen on the face of a professional singer. It was a smile of welcome, of encouragement. I read in that smile a message which said: "Don't be afraid. I am here to give you my benediction, not to criticize you. Triumph again and I shall rejoice with you in your triumph." I could have taken that sweet "little lady" to my arms and hugged her to my heart for her encouragement at that supreme moment.

Though the newspaper comments were very flattering, there was one sequel to that night's performance which was more flattering still. Early next morning there arrived at my hotel a little *billet-doux*. It was in the handwriting of Patti. In it she congratulated me upon the success of the performance and asked if I would be so good as to take lunch with her that day at the Carlton Hotel. Naturally I was jubilant at receiving this invitation and accepted immediately. I found that Patti was occupying a special suite of rooms at the hotel. She received me very graciously, and was exceedingly generous in her remarks upon my singing. The "little lady" was dressed in black silk, and her hair, I observed, was streaked with grey. She was very unaffected, and yet she bore herself with a queenly dignity and a sweet amiableness that impressed me deeply. At that time I had not heard her sing, and I felt a great desire to ask her to go to the piano and sing for my benefit one of her old favourites, "Comin' through the Rye" or "Home, Sweet Home." Yet I had not the courage to ask, and my great little hostess did not offer to do so. At this time, of course, Patti was well past sixty. Yet I was subsequently to hear her sing once before death snatched her from the world in which she reigned so long. Her voice, even at that late hour of her life, was still of exceptional power, sweetness, and purity.

"YOU ARE 'THE NEW PATTI.'"

"IT was so good of you to come last night," I remarked. Whereat she replied: "I came to see if a successor to me had really been found. And I have asked you here to-day to tell you that I agree with what the newspapers are saying. You are 'the New Patti,' signora. I congratulate you."

I think I was more impressed by the nobility of the character of the "little lady," who was so ready to admit without qualification that her mantle had fallen on me, than I was by the flattering declaration that she had made. I left the Carlton that day feeling very happy. It was the greatest day of my life.

Patti was a frequent visitor at Covent Garden during my seasons there. And whenever I caught her gaze she always answered with her sweet and appreciative smile. Sometimes she would go farther than this and would go back to her hotel and write me one of those impulsive and heartening letters which were characteristic of her. The following, written in Patti's own handwriting, I have treasured most carefully:—

Carlton Hotel, London.
May 1st, 1908.

My dear Madame Tetrazzini,—

Bravo! Bravo! and again Bravo! I cannot tell you how much pleasure it gave me to hear you last night, and what a joy it was to me to hear your beautiful Italian phrasing and how immensely touched I was by the wonderful feeling and pathos of your voice. You made me cry in the last act. I should like also to add that in addition to the phenomenal brilliancy and purity of your high notes, your beautiful method, your phrasing, the ease and flexibility of your voice, and your acting, all gave me the very greatest pleasure, and I shall take the first opportunity of going to hear you again.

I heartily rejoice in your well-deserved triumph. Bravo! Bravo! And again Bravo!

Yours sincerely,

ADELINA PATTI-CEDERSTRÖM.

What a wonderful letter! At my several homes in Italy I have countless souvenirs of my public appearances in all parts of the world. I cherish them all. Each links the present with some delightful experience of the past. I would not willingly part with one of these souvenirs. And the one which I prize most of all is this letter from my illustrious compatriot, Patti.

(To be concluded.)

Mr. Cray's Adventures

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Illustrated by S. ABBEY

No. 7
MR. HOMOR'S LEGACY

MR. JOSEPH P. CRAY, wandering around the world in his pleasant quest of adventures, harmless or otherwise, found himself one March morning on the terrace of the Golf Hotel at Hyères. By his side stood the young man in irreproachable flannels whom he had just intercepted on his way to the tennis courts. It was a somewhat amazing meeting.

"Is it Major Hartopp this time?" Mr. Cray inquired.

The young man signified assent.

"It is only bunglers who keep changing their pseudonyms," he said. "I am not a bungler."

Mr. Cray, for once in his life, was a little taken aback.

"You are taking this pretty coolly, young fellow, aren't you?" he observed. "I suppose you know that for several months the police have been looking for the man who tried to cash a cheque for a thousand pounds on my account, and for the scarlet Mephistopheles who scooped up about ten thousand pounds' worth of jewels at the Albert Hall?"

The young man shook his head gently.

"You exaggerate the position, my dear Mr. Cray," he expostulated. "In the first place, the cheque for one thousand pounds you signed, in the second place, it could never be proved that it was presented, and with regard to the jewels, not one of them has ever been traced, and there is not a shred of evidence to connect the scarlet Mephistopheles with these robberies, or, if it comes to that, me with the scarlet Mephistopheles."

"There is the matter of your past record in America," Mr. Cray murmured.

"There I grant you a trick," the young man interrupted. "If you care to communicate with the police, I will admit that I might find my position untenable. Somehow I do not think that you will do so."

"And why not?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"Come this way and I will show you."

The pseudo-Major Hartopp led his companion along the front of the terrace to where a little recess formed a shelter secure from the lightly-moving wind, and where the sun came pouring in, soft and warm and genial. An invalid chair was drawn up against the wall, and lying in it at full length was a woman. Mr. Cray felt a little thrill of pity as the pale, wasted face was turned towards his, and the dark, hollow eyes lit up for a moment with mingled fear and recognition.

"This is the reason why we are here," Hartopp explained. "The doctors told us that nothing but the sun could keep my wife alive. That is why I accepted the risk."

Mr. Cray leaned over the chair.

"I am very sorry to see you so ill," he said.

She smiled at him—a very mirthless effort.

"It was Christine Seboa," she faltered. "She seems to have torn my heart to pieces. Now she has gone and I am myself again. She went too late."

"You must never say that," Mr. Cray

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enjoined, cheerfully. "This place has cured more invalids than any spot in the South of France."

She looked at him mournfully.

"Are we allowed to stay here?" she said.

"So far as I am concerned, yes," Mr. Cray replied. "I've no call to remember anything I don't choose, and I won't. But before we close up the subject, will you tell me how you got me to sign those cheques?"

"I didn't do it," she assured him. "It was Christine Seboa, and she has gone."

"No chance of her turning up again, I suppose?" Mr. Cray inquired.

The figure in the chair shook her head wistfully.

"My body is not strong enough to hold her," she answered.

MR. CRAY settled down to live the everyday life of the little community. He played golf in the morning, dozed with a cigar in the sunshine in the afternoon, and played bridge in the evening. All the time he kept his eye upon the Hartopps, and by degrees a conviction sprang up in his mind. Although, to all appearance, Hartopp, who was a fine athlete, was engrossed by the care of his invalid wife and the sports of the place, he was in reality at Hyères for some other purpose. He had a habit of absenting himself sometimes for the whole day, of taking long walks into the country and returning with moody, downcast expression. He was *persona grata* amongst the younger guests, but he took little pains to ingratiate himself with anyone. And just as Mr. Cray watched him, so he seemed at times to be watching Mr. Cray. But for that wan figure, which only the sunlight seemed to keep alive, there were times when Mr. Cray regretted that he had not obeyed his first instinct and sent a wire to Scotland Yard.

"Say, what's your husband got on his mind?" he inquired one morning of Mrs. Hartopp.

She turned her great sunken eyes towards him.

"He is worried about financial matters," she told him, solemnly.

"H'm! I should have thought he'd been set up for a bit," Mr. Cray observed.

She shook her head slowly.

"He has some securities," she explained, naively, "but it is too early to realize upon them yet. You wouldn't care, I suppose, to make an advance upon them?"

"God bless my soul, no!" Mr. Cray declared, a little pettishly. "I'm trafficking with my conscience some, ma'am, if I keep my mouth shut, but you mustn't try to rope me in as a partner."

"You look at these things so unreasonably," she murmured. "You have never lost anything worth speaking of by us."

"Personally, perhaps not, ma'am," Mr. Cray acknowledged, "but I have a conscience."

Then she suddenly saw a bent figure approaching.

"You are a dear thing," she said, "although sometimes you can be very hard. Please go now. Here comes Mr. Homor. He wants to speak to me about his wife."

"His late wife," Mr. Cray observed, raising his hat.

"That is a foolish term," she answered, reprovingly.

Mr. Cray glanced at the gaunt, bent figure approaching, noticed the eager gleam which shone for a moment in the lustreless eyes, and turned away.

"H'm!" he muttered. "I suppose Mr. Homor can look after himself."

On the golf links he found Hartopp practising iron shots, and challenged him to a few holes.

"See here, Hartopp," he said, as soon as they got started, "I kind of take an interest in you and your wife, although the Lord knows why. I guess it's because she seems sick. What's the game with Mr. Homor?"

Hartopp was a little irritable.

"My dear friend," he replied, "there is no game at all. Mr. Homor is interested in Spiritualism and has just lost his wife. Mina is able to console him."

"Anything doing in the way of séances?"

Major Hartopp sighed.

"I believe that something of the sort has been arranged for this evening," he admitted. "There are two or three women in the hotel, and one other man, who belong to the cult."

"Are you going?"

"I am not," was the firm reply. "I am very much opposed to the whole business. Besides, I don't think Mina is strong enough."

"Why don't you stop it, then?"

Major Hartopp glanced at his companion almost contemptuously.

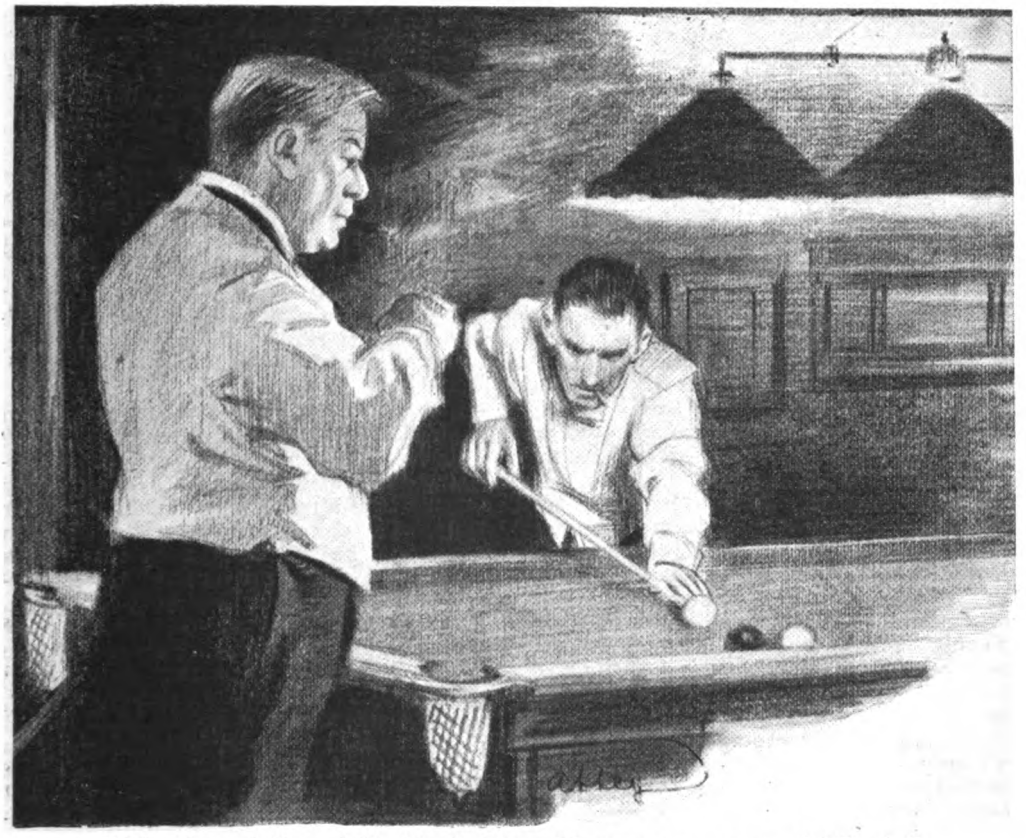
"If you know as little of Mina as that," he said, "you've been wasting your time."

"I sometimes wonder," Mr. Cray rejoined, "whether I know as much about either of you as any person with an ounce of common sense ought to."

Major Hartopp played a wonderful approach and watched his ball run to the hole. Then he turned towards his companion, the flicker of a smile upon his lips.

"These flashes of super-intelligence, Cray," he declared, "convince me that you are really a great man. Do you realize that I am three up on bogey?"

That afternoon there was only one topic



"Mr. Cray challenged his friend, Major Hartopp, to a game of billiards."

of conversation in the lounge and on the terrace of the Golf Hotel. It had been privately announced that a small séance would take place after dinner in Mrs. Hartopp's suite, to which various people who had professed themselves interested had been invited. Mrs. Hartopp herself was invisible, resting for the exertions of the evening. Major Hartopp, when spoken to upon the subject, was abrupt and almost rude. It was at this period of his stay at the Golf Hotel that Mr. Cray first came into contact with Mr. George Pomfrey, a middle-aged, quiet-looking man of studious habits and a marked propensity for solitude. He paused before the former's chair on the terrace.

"Are you helping your friends this evening, sir?" he inquired.

Mr. Cray was in rather a bad temper and the question annoyed him.

"How in thunder should I be helping them?" he retorted. "I don't take any stock in Spiritualism, and the Hartopps are only hotel acquaintances of mine."

"Is that all?" the other asked, quietly.

Mr. Cray felt the keen grey eyes upon his face and found himself at a disadvantage.

"I met them once in town," he acknowledged.

"Ah!"

Mr. Pomfrey passed on, stooping a little, as was his wont, leaning upon his stick, and with a general air of introspection which had been recognized as one of his chief characteristics. Mr. Cray smoked on for some time and then strolled round the front to the side of the hotel. The suite allotted to the Hartopps was on the ground floor for the convenience of Mrs. Hartopp. Mr. Cray studied it thoughtfully. There were windows opening to the ground, in each of the bedrooms and the sitting-room, and on the other side of the bathroom was a small door, through which Mrs. Hartopp's invalid chair generally issued. There were one or two suggestions which occurred to him as he stood there in a ruminative frame of mind.

"Maybe," he decided, finally, "I'll see something of that séance."

Mr. Cray challenged his friend, Major

Hartopp, to a game of billiards that evening after dinner. The latter, after one game, in which he gave his opponent a hundred and twenty-five out of two hundred and fifty and beat him by sixty, put up his cue and declined to play any more.

"I am going to bed," he said, shortly.

Mr. Cray glanced at the clock.

"Won't you find the séance a little disturbing?" he asked. "Besides, the only pleasant thing about these shows is that they are silent. Spooks don't seem to care about a noise."

The two men parted. Mr. Cray also went to his room, but he emerged a few minutes later by the back entrance and found his way into the grounds. The night was dark and a slight mistral was blowing from the hills. He made his way silently round until he reached the walk in front of the Hartopps' suite. Here he made a careful examination of his surroundings. So far as it was possible to tell, he was the only person who was seeking this illicit means of obtaining information as to the séance. From the chinks in the gaily-lit windows of the main building of the hotel came the sound of the orchestra playing dance music in the lounge. Every now and then he could even distinguish fragments of conversation from the numerous bridge parties. Inside the room, through the inch or two of gaping blind which was his only means of observation, everything at first seemed shielded by a wall of deep black. Presently, however, one by one the white faces of those who sat round the table, blurred and unrecognizable in detail, still became faintly recognizable. Every now and then there was a low murmuring, which he had learnt to tabulate in his mind as the spirit voice of the medium. Everyone seemed deeply stirred, tragically interested. He heard Homor's raucous, trembling voice.

"If I am to have comfort, I must see her. Let me see her for one moment."

Again there came Mrs. Hartopp's voice, faint and weary, yet always with its suggestive, unearthly note.

"I will try. Look away from me, every one, while I try."

It was at this point that Mr. Cray became vastly interested. From the direction of the voice, he gathered that Mrs. Hartopp had been lying upon a couch drawn up close to a screen. Without being able to trace any movement, the white blur of her face seemed to disappear. An intense silence followed. The window of the bedroom on the other side of the door was softly pushed open. Almost immediately the door itself opened several inches. Mr. Cray in those moments forgot his wariness. Through the window stepped an undistinguishable form bearing a bundle on its arm. Through the door came a shadowy figure. And just then, on the top of his head, Mr. Cray received a soft, resonant crack. It was considerably later when he found himself lying on the gravel terrace looking up at the stars.

Very slowly he scrambled to his feet. His head was still aching and was remarkably sore. From the sitting-room window, a few yards away, lightswere now burning, although most of the lights in the hotel had been extinguished. He struck a match and looked at his watch. It was eleven o'clock, which meant that he had been lying there for nearly an hour. He staggered to his feet, shook the dust from his clothes, re-entered the hotel, and made his way to his room.

IT was a very grim Mr. Cray, however, who strolled out on the terrace the following morning and made his way with a certain ominous deliberation to the little sunny corner where Mrs. Hartopp usually held her court. The corner was more crowded than usual, but the lady in question herself was absent. Mr. Homor was sitting there, however, surrounded by a little bevy of women. Mr. Homor, without a doubt, was a very changed man. On the outskirts of the little gathering the new-comer paused to regard him with wonder. The hopeless, almost pathetic, misery of his face was gone. That wistful fear of impending death, which was always with him, had also passed. He was like a man who on the threshold of the grave had found new hope. He sat there in the sunshine with a serene smile upon his lips.

"Where's the lady this morning?" Mr. Cray asked.

"She is utterly exhausted with the efforts of last night," one of the women told him. "It is very doubtful whether she will be up to-day at all."

"What sort of a show did you have?" Mr. Cray proceeded, curiously.

"It was wonderful!" the woman murmured.

"Marvellous!" another echoed.

"It was without doubt one of the most amazing demonstrations I have ever seen," a man declared.

Mr. Cray opened his lips to speak, and at that moment Mr. Homor leaned a little forward in his chair. He looked straight across at Mr. Cray.

"It was more than anything which has been said," he declared. "It was just a miracle. Mr. Cray, I saw my wife—my dear wife whom I lost many months ago."

Mr. Cray held his peace for a moment. Then he ventured a single question.

"Are you quite sure of that, Mr. Homor?" he asked.

"I am absolutely and entirely sure of it," was the confident answer. "She came to

"A hurried glimpse was quite enough. The box was half-filled with a miscellaneous assortment of jewellery."

me out of the shadows of that room, dressed as I remember her best, her hair, her little articles of jewellery, the light in her kind eyes—they were all there. It was unmistakable, and, though it sounded a long way off, I heard her voice."

"Do you carry any picture of her with you?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"There is a picture of her in my room," Mr. Homor replied, "but no one has ever seen it. You are perhaps one of those," he went on, "who find it hard to believe. Heaven knows I found it hard enough until last night! For months I have been carrying with me always the loneliness which is almost worse than death, and the fear of things to come which grows with those who have only a short time to live. And now—look at me. I am a new man. I am content to live or to die. There is no fear left in me."

Mr. Cray stood for a moment gazing at that thin streak of the Mediterranean shining below. All thoughts of exposing the trick which he felt sure he had seen passed away. He said nothing of his own accident, nor did he hint at his own convictions. He nodded his head reverently.

"Say, Mr. Homor, I congratulate you," he said, as he moved on. "Yours was a wonderful experience. It should be helpful to many others."

"I mean to make it so," was the enthusiastic reply.

ON his mechanical way down to the golf links, Mr. Cray was accosted by Mr. Pomfrey, his acquaintance of the previous afternoon.

"Been hearing about the manifestation last night?" the latter inquired.

Mr. Cray nodded, but kept his own counsel. He would have passed on but the other detained him.

"I have been wondering, Mr. Cray," he continued, "whether you could spare me a moment to discuss a matter of some little importance?"

"Sure!" Mr. Cray assented. "I'm doing nothing. Get right on with it."

Mr. Pomfrey drew him towards the hotel.

"If you would be so kind," he begged, "please take me to your room. We can speak there without any possibility of being overheard."

Mr. Cray was surprised but acquiescent. Together the two men ascended in the lift and entered the spacious and very pleasant room which had been allotted to Mr. Cray. His guest looked around it appreciatively.

"Very nice quarters," he observed. "Very nice indeed. Now, Mr. Cray, have you any idea what I want with you?"

"Not the slightest in the world," was the truthful reply.

Mr. Pomfrey unbuttoned his coat and showed a small medallion on the inside of his waistcoat.

"In case that does not make things clear to you," he said, "will you allow me?"

He handed over a card, which Mr. Cray read in amazement:—

SUPERINTENDENT GEORGE POMFREY,
SCOTLAND YARD.

"Well, you surprise me," Mr. Cray acknowledged. "That's your job, however. What can I do for you?"

"I am here," the detective explained, "in search of certain jewellery stolen from the Albert Hall on the night of the ball in November last."

Mr. Cray nodded.

"I was there."

"You were there," the other continued, "with your friends Major and Mrs. Hartopp."

"I don't know about being with them," Mr. Cray objected. "I met them there for the first time."

Mr. Pomfrey's fingers caressed his chin thoughtfully.

"For the first time," he repeated. "Mrs. Hartopp spent a great part of the evening in your box, and my information is that you left the ball together."

"Sure!" Mr. Cray admitted. "I gave them a lift. If you make inquiries at your headquarters, you will find a little further information concerning the events of that evening."

"My immediate business is to do with the jewellery," was the cautious reply. "Acting upon certain information, I may tell you that in the first place I have searched the suite and luggage of Major and Mrs. Hartopp."

"Any luck?"

"Not up to the present. With your permission," the man went on, his eyes travelling curiously about the room, "I will now proceed farther with my duty."

A light began to dawn upon Mr. Cray. He gazed at his visitor in amazement.

"Let me get this," he exclaimed. "Do I understand that you are here to search my apartments, that you think I am mixed up in any way with the Hartopps?"

Mr. Pomfrey smiled.

"We don't need to go into that," he said. "You were with them on the night of the robbery, and you are here staying at the same hotel. I admit that I have no search warrant, but if I might offer you my advice——"

"Search, by all means," Mr. Cray interrupted, throwing himself into an easy chair. "When you've finished, I'll tell you a yarn about the Hartopps, which you can verify for yourself when you get back to town."

The detective made no reply. He made a prompt and methodical search of the whole of Mr. Cray's baggage. When he had finished he pointed to a cupboard.

"What is in there?" he inquired.

"Some empty bags," was the prompt reply. "The door isn't locked."

Mr. Pomfrey rummaged about for some minutes. Finally he dragged out into the room a kit-bag.

"Have you the key of this?" he asked.

Mr. Cray stared at the bag with a puzzled frown.

"That's not my bag," he declared.

Mr. Pomfrey's manner became a little more constrained.

"There is the same label upon it as the rest of your luggage," he pointed out, "and written in the same handwriting. Also, as you perceive, your initials."

Mr. Cray rose to his feet and examined it in detail. Finally he handed his keys to the detective.

"You can try," he said, simply, "but I don't believe I have one which fits that bag."

The surmise was correct. After a few minutes' manipulation, however, the detective managed to open it with a master-key which he produced from his own pocket. Inside was a black tin box at which Mr. Cray stared in ever-increasing astonishment. Mr. Pomfrey lifted the lid and closed it again almost immediately. A hurried glimpse was quite enough. The box was half-filled with a miscellaneous assortment of jewellery, in the midst of which flashed some very fine diamonds.

"Well, I'm damned!" Mr. Cray exclaimed.

"Have you any explanation to offer?" the detective asked.

"None," was the bewildered reply. "The bag isn't mine, and I never saw the jewels before."

The detective smiled faintly. It was obvious, however, that he too was puzzled.

"Mr. Cray," he confessed, "I'll tell you frankly that I came into this room in the execution of my duty but without the slightest suspicion that I should find here what I was in search of. I must send in my report to headquarters and reconstruct the case in my mind. In the meantime, I don't wish to do anything which might seem disagreeable. You have a very comfortable room here, with a pleasant balcony where you can take the air. If you will give me your *parole* not to leave it for twenty-four hours, you shall remain undisturbed."

"On consideration that you let me send a telegram of my own to Inspector Johns, of Scotland Yard." Mr. Cray replied, "I agree."

"I will send off personally any message with which you may entrust me," the detective promised.

He left the room, carrying the kit-bag with him. Mr. Cray sat down at his writing-table and wrote a telegram. After luncheon he wrote more telegrams. Somehow or other, the day dragged away. On the following morning he rose at the usual time, breakfasted, and afterwards walked restlessly up and down the room, smoking a cigar. There had come for him no word or message from Mr. Pomfrey. Five minutes after the twenty-four hours had elapsed, he left his room and descended on to the terrace. He went at once to the bureau and asked for Mr. Pomfrey.

'Mr. Pomfrey left by the afternoon train yesterday, sir," the man told him.

Mr. Cray was dumbfounded.

"Did he leave any note or message for me?" he inquired.

The clerk searched the pigeon-hole and produced a note, which Mr. Cray carried out into the sunshine. Its contents were brief and to the point:—

Dear Mr. Cray,—I hasten to let you know that according to instructions received from headquarters, the matter referred to between us yesterday will not be further proceeded with.

Faithfully yours,
George Pomfrey.

MR. CRAY wandered mechanically on to the corner where Mrs. Hartopp's invalid carriage was usually to be found. There were several people seated there, but no sign of the person of whom he was in search. An acquaintance welcomed him.

"Thought you'd left, too, Mr. Cray. Didn't see anything of you yesterday."

"I had a slight headache and stayed in my room," was the somewhat grim explanation.

"You haven't heard the news, then?"

"Nary a thing!"

"First of all, then, the Hartopps left yesterday by the same train as Mr. Pomfrey."

"God bless my soul!" Mr. Cray exclaimed.

"She looked terribly ill," his informant went on. "They had almost to carry her into the omnibus. Then you haven't heard about Mr. Homor, I suppose?"

"Not a thing."

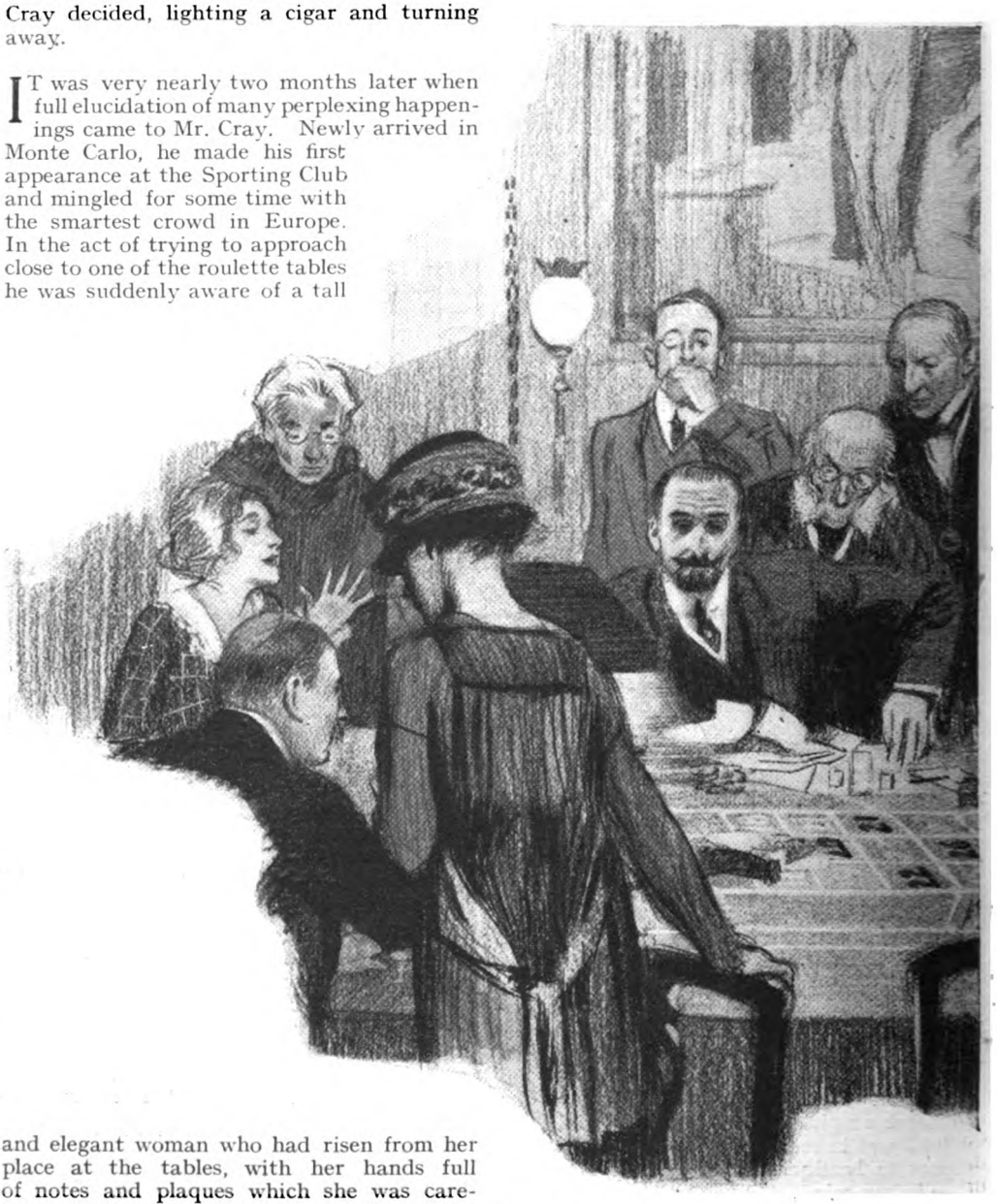
"His lawyer arrived from London last night. They say that he is much worse. The doctor announced this morning that he could not live through the day."

"Say, that's bad!" Mr. Cray murmured. "Anything else?"

"There's a great golf match on this morning—the Costabel pro and a visitor from Costabel, against Dell and Scott."

"I'll stroll down and have a look," Mr. Cray decided, lighting a cigar and turning away.

IT was very nearly two months later when full elucidation of many perplexing happenings came to Mr. Cray. Newly arrived in Monte Carlo, he made his first appearance at the Sporting Club and mingled for some time with the smartest crowd in Europe. In the act of trying to approach close to one of the roulette tables he was suddenly aware of a tall and elegant woman who had risen from her place at the tables, with her hands full of notes and plaques which she was carelessly stuffing into a gold bag. Something about her expression puzzled him. Their eyes met, and a charming smile of welcome parted her lips.



"Why, Mr. Cray!" she exclaimed. "How delightful!"

Mr. Cray shook hands dumbly with this very beautiful apparition. She wore a smart afternoon costume of black and white, a wonderful hat—black with white ospreys. In that very exclusive gathering, her slim elegance, her air of gracious distinction, singled her out for universal notice.

"This is quite delightful," she murmured. "Guy!" Major Hartopp extricated himself from a little crowd and shook hands affably. Mr. Pomfrey followed suit.

"Haven't forgotten me, I hope, Mr. Cray?" he asked, smiling.

Mrs. Hartopp laid her hand lightly upon Mr. Cray's coat-sleeve.

"Let us all," she suggested, amiably, "go and have a cocktail. If this is your first visit, Mr. Cray, you must be introduced to Charles."

They found four seats in the little bar. Mr. Cray found himself seated between Major and Mrs. Hartopp. Mr. Pomfrey strolled away and gave impressive orders to the white-linen-clad celebrity behind the counter.

"I always felt quite sure that we should meet again," Mrs. Hartopp continued, smilingly.

"I guess I was counting on it, too,"

"'Why, Mr. Cray!' she exclaimed. 'How delightful!' Mr. Cray shook hands dumbly with this very beautiful apparition."

Mr. Cray, who was beginning to recover himself, remarked. "What's that fellow Pomfrey doing here with you?"

"Guy, dear, you explain," Mrs. Hartopp suggested, amiably. "Tell Mr. Cray everything."

MAJOR HARTOPP scratched at his stubbly little moustache.

"I expect Mr. Cray has puzzled things out for himself long before this," he observed.

"What about that jewellery?"

"Perhaps we took rather a liberty with you," Major Hartopp went on. "We got those few trifles out to Hyères quite safely, but Mina and I weren't feeling quite comfortable, so we thought they would be safer in your rooms, in a bag that—er—might have belonged to you."

Mr. Cray muttered something under his breath and swallowed hard.

"But what about Pomfrey?"

"Ah, yes—Pomfrey!" Major Hartopp repeated. "Good fellow, George Pomfrey."

"One of our oldest friends," Mrs. Hartopp murmured.

"You see, when we made up our minds to leave," Major Hartopp explained, "we naturally wanted the jewels back again, the coast being clear, and all that sort of thing. Pomfrey's done a few stunts with us before, and he undertook to get the jewels back and keep you out of the way in case you were inquisitive at our leaving."

Mr. Cray held himself back with great difficulty.

"I gather, then," he said, "that Mr. Pomfrey is not connected with the detective force?"

"Great Scot, no!" was the emphatic reply. "On the contrary!"

"Just let me get this," Mr. Cray persisted. "Now, that's a police commissionaire over there, isn't it?"

"Of course it is," Mrs. Hartopp assented, with a sweet smile. "He's a dear friend of ours. Should you like to meet him?"

"I may presently," Mr. Cray replied, significantly. "Where are the jewels?"

"Safely disposed of long ago," Mrs. Hartopp assured him.

"This is—er—one of the best markets in the world," her husband observed, "for—delicate transactions of that sort. Lump sum down and no questions asked, you know."

"I see," Mr. Cray murmured. "And you are now engaged, I presume, in spending the proceeds?"

Mrs. Hartopp laughed delightfully.

"My dear man, we don't need to do that," she said. "Didn't you hear about Mr. Homor?"

"I've heard nothing," Mr. Cray assured them. "I've been in Algiers."

"The dear man left me fifty thousand pounds in order that I might pursue my marvellous investigations. Wasn't it perfectly sweet of him?"

Mr. Cray sat quite still. Mr. Pomfrey strolled up, followed by a waiter bearing on his silver tray four tall glasses, filled with cloudy, amber-coloured liquid.

"There are only six men breathing," he announced, impressively, "who could mix this. It's the finest welcome we could give you to Monte Carlo, sir."

Mr. Cray mechanically accepted his glass, but made no response. His attitude remained negative. Pomfrey leaned a little towards him.

"Mr. Cray," he said, "may I speak a plain word to you? You are one of those shrewd, amiable gentlemen of independent means who have a natural taste for adventure and who go muddling about the world, sometimes interfering a good deal in other people's business. You get lots of fun out of it, and from what I know of you, you generally come out on top. From what I know of you further, I believe you to be a latitudinarian. The law isn't always just. The criminal is sometimes a good fellow. Our friends here have been up against you a bit, but you haven't come to much harm. Anything you know that you don't care about, forget. Be a sportsman, and don't look at that glass as though you saw poison inside."

Mina Hartopp leaned a little towards him. Her eyes were dancing with amusement, her smile was irresistible.

"You are really such a dear, Mr. Cray," she murmured. "You won't refuse to drink with me?"

Mr. Cray raised his glass. All four were solemnly clinked together. The moment of tension had passed. As he set his glass down empty, a beatific smile parted Mr. Cray's lips. He made telegraphic signs to the functionary behind the bar.

"You'll repeat that with me," he invited.

"It's pax, isn't it?" Mina Hartopp whispered in his ear.

"Sure!" Mr. Cray promised.

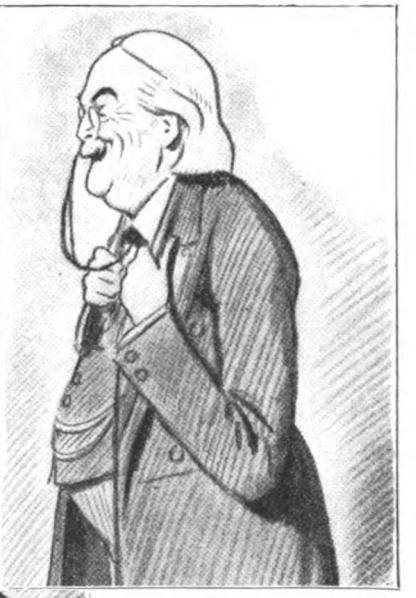
(Another of Mr. Cray's Adventures next month.)

STARTLING RESULTS OF COALITION.

By

E. T. REED.

SIR AUSTRIC GEDDBERLAIN.



ARTHUR LLOYD BALGEORGE.

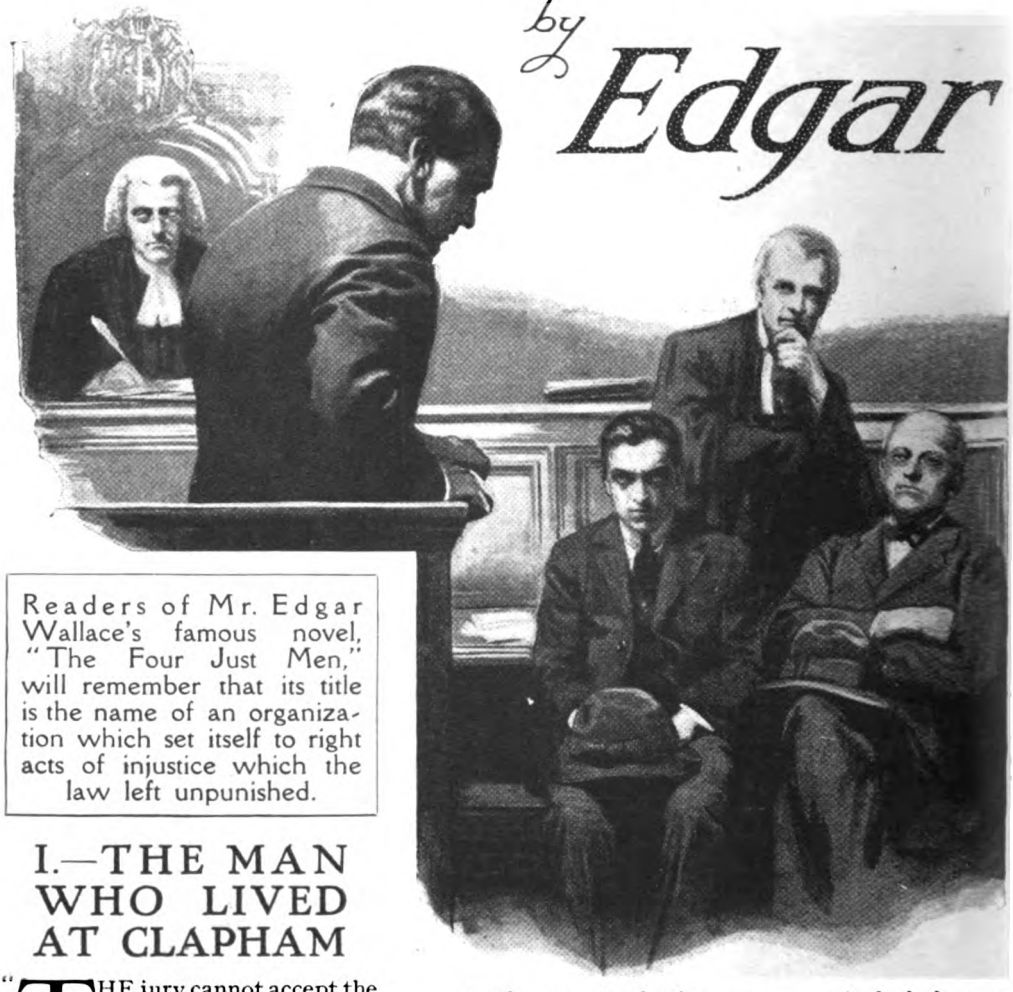
ARTHSTON BALCHILL.

D. BONAR LAWYD GEORGE.

DAVID LLOYDSTON GEORCHILL.

Some Adventures of THE FOUR JUST

by Edgar



Readers of Mr. Edgar Wallace's famous novel, "The Four Just Men," will remember that its title is the name of an organization which set itself to right acts of injustice which the law left unpunished.

I.—THE MAN WHO LIVED AT CLAPHAM

"THE jury cannot accept the unsupported suggestion—unsupported even by the prisoner's testimony since he has not gone into the box—that Mr. Noah Stedland is a blackmailer and that he obtained a large sum of money from the prisoner by this practice. That is a defence which is rather suggested by the cross-examination than by the production of evidence. The defence does not even tell us the nature of the threat which Stedland employed."

The man in the big oaken pen looked down at from the well

The remainder of the summing-up was creditable to the best traditions of the Bar, and the jury, without retiring, returned a verdict of "Guilty."

There was a rustle of movement in the court and a thin babble of whispered talk as the Judge fixed his pince-nez and began to write.

MEN

Wallace

Illustrated by E. Verpilleux

the pale, drawn face of a girl turned to him of the court."

The man in the big oaken pen looked down at the pale, drawn face of a girl turned to him from the well of the court and smiled encouragingly. For his part, he did not blanch, and his grave eyes went back to the figure on the Bench—the puce-gowned, white-headed figure that was writing so industriously. What did a judge write on these occasions, he wondered? Surely not a *précis* of the crime. He was impatient now to have done with it all; this airy court, these blurred rows of pink faces in the gloom of the public gallery, the indifferent counsel, and particularly with the two men who had sat near the lawyers' pews watching him intently.

He wondered who they were, what interest they had in the proceedings. Perhaps they were foreign authors, securing first-hand impressions. They had the appearance of foreigners. One was very tall (he had seen him rise to his feet once); the other was slight, and gave an impression of boyishness, though his hair was grey. They were both clean-shaven, and both were dressed in black and balanced on their knees broad-brimmed hats of soft black felt.

A cough from the Judge brought his attention back to the Bench.

"Jeffrey Storr," said his lordship, "I entirely agree with the verdict of the jury. Your defence that Stedland robbed you of your savings and that you broke into his house for the purpose of taking the law into your own hands and securing the money and a document, the character of which you do not specify, but which you allege proved his guilt, could not be considered seriously by any Court of Justice. Your story sounds as though you had read of that famous, or infamous, association called The Four Just Men, which existed some years ago, but which is now happily dispersed. Those men set themselves to punish where the law failed. It is a monstrous assumption that the law ever fails! You have committed a very serious offence, and the fact that you were at the moment of your arrest and capture in possession of a loaded revolver serves very gravely to aggravate your crime. You will be kept in penal servitude for seven years."

Jeffrey Storr bowed, and, without so much as a glance at the girl in the court, turned and descended the steps leading to the cells.

The two foreign-looking men who had excited the prisoner's interest and resentment were the first to leave the court.

Once in the street the taller of the two stopped.

"I think we will wait for the girl," he said.

"Is she the wife?" asked the slight man.

"Married the week he made his unfortunate investment," replied the tall man; then, "It was a curious coincidence, that reference of the Judge's to The Four Just Men."

The other smiled.

"It was in that very court that you were

sentenced to death, Manfred," he said, and the man called Manfred nodded.

" I wondered whether the old usher would remember me," he answered; " he has a reputation for never forgetting a face. Apparently the loss of my beard has worked a miracle, for I actually spoke to him. Here she is."

Fortunately the girl was alone. A beautiful face, thought Gonsalez, the younger of the two men. She held her chin high and there was no sign of tears. As she walked quickly toward Newgate Street they followed her. She crossed the road into Hatton Garden, and then it was that Manfred spoke.

" Pardon me, Mrs. Storr," he said, and she turned and stared at the foreign-looking man suspiciously.

" If you are a reporter——" she began.

" I'm not," smiled Manfred, " nor am I a friend of your husband's, though I thought of lying to you in that respect in order to find an excuse for talking to you."

His frankness procured her interest.

" I do not wish to talk about poor Jeffrey's terrible trouble," she said. " I just want to be alone."

Manfred nodded.

" I understand that," he said, sympathetically, " but I wish to be a friend of your husband's and perhaps I can help him. The story he told in the box was true—you thought that, too, Leon ? "

Gonsalez nodded.

" Obviously true," he said. " I particularly noticed his eyelids. When a man lies he blinks at every repetition of the lie. Have you observed, my dear George, that men cannot tell lies when their hands are clenched, and that when women lie they clasp their hands together ? "

She looked at Gonsalez in bewilderment.

She was in no mood for a lecture on the physiology of expression, and even had she known that Leon Gonsalez was the author of three large books which ranked with the best that Lombroso or Mantegazza had given to the world, she would have been no more willing to listen.

" The truth is, Mrs. Storr," said Manfred, interpreting her new distress, " we think that we can free your husband and prove his innocence. But we want as many facts about the case as we can get."

She hesitated only a moment.

" I have some furnished lodgings in Gray's Inn Road," she said; " perhaps you will be good enough to come with me."

" My lawyer does not think there is any use in appealing against the sentence," she went on as they fell in one on either side of her.

Manfred shook his head.

" The Appeal Court would uphold the sentence," he said, quietly; " with the evidence you have there is no possibility of your husband being released."

She looked round at him in dismay, and now he saw that she was very near to tears.

" I thought—you said——? " she began a little shakily.

Manfred nodded.

" We know Stedland," he said, " and——"

" The curious thing about blackmailers is that the occiput is hardly observable," interrupted Gonsalez, thoughtfully. " I examined sixty-two heads in the Spanish prisons, and in every case the occipital protuberance was little more than a bony ridge. Now, in homicidal heads, the occiput sticks out like a pigeon's egg."

" My friend is rather an authority upon the structure of the head," smiled Manfred. " Yes, we know Stedland. His operations have been reported to us from time to time. You remember the Wellingford case, Leon ? "

Gonsalez nodded.

" Then you are detectives ? " asked the girl.

Manfred laughed softly.

" No, we are not detectives—we are interested in crime. I think we have the best and most thorough record of the unconvicted criminal class of any in the world."

THEY walked on in silence for some time. " Stedland is a bad man," nodded Gonsalez, as though the conviction had suddenly dawned upon him. " Did you observe his ears ? They are unusually long, and the outer margins are pointed—the Darwinian tubercle—Manfred. And did you remark, my dear friend, that the root of the helix divides the concha into two distinct cavities, and that the lobule was adherent ? A truly criminal ear. That man has committed murder. It is impossible to possess such an ear and not to murder."

The flat to which she admitted them was small and wretchedly furnished. Glancing round the tiny dining-room, Manfred noted the essential appointments which accompany a " furnished " flat.

The girl, who had disappeared into her room to take off her coat, now returned, and sat by the table at which, at her invitation, they had seated themselves.

" I realize that I am being indiscreet," she said, with the faintest of smiles; " but I feel that you really want to help me, and I have the curious sense that you can ! The police have not been unkind or unfair to me and poor Jeff. On the contrary, they have been most helpful. I fancy that they suspected Mr. Stedland of being a blackmailer, and they were hoping that he could supply some evidence. When that evidence failed, there was nothing for them to do but to press

forward the charge. Now, what can I tell you ? "

" The story which was not told in court," replied Manfred.

She was silent for a time.

" I will tell you," she said at last. " Only my husband's lawyer knows, and I have an idea that he was sceptical as to the truth of what I am now telling you. And if he is sceptical," she said in despair, " how can I expect to convince you ? "

The eager eyes of Gonsalez were fixed on hers, and it was he who answered.

" We are already convinced, Mrs. Storr," and Manfred nodded.

AGAIN there was a pause. She was evidently reluctant to begin a narrative which, Manfred guessed, might not be creditable to her ; and this proved to be the case.

" When I was a girl," she began simply, " I was at school in Sussex—a big girls' school ; I think there were over two hundred pupils. I am not going to excuse anything I did," she went on quickly. " I fell in love with a boy—well, he was a butcher's boy ! That sounds dreadful, doesn't it ? But you understand I was a child, a very impressionable child—oh, it sounds horrible, I know ; but I used to meet him in the garden leading out from the prep. room after prayers ; he climbed over the wall to those meetings, and we talked and talked, sometimes for an hour. There was no more in it than a boy and girl love affair, and I can't explain just why I committed such a folly."

" Mantegazza explains the matter very comfortably in his ' Study of Attraction,' " murmured Leon Gonsalez. " But forgive me, I interrupted you."

" As I say, it was a boy and girl friendship, a kind of hero worship on my part, for I thought he was wonderful. He must have been the nicest of butcher boys," she smiled again, " because he never offended me by so much as a word. The friendship burnt itself out in a month or two, and there the matter might have ended but for the fact that I had been foolish enough to write letters. They were very ordinary, stupid love-letters, and perfectly innocent—or, at least, they seemed so to me at the time. To-day, when I read them in the light of a greater knowledge, they take my breath away."

" You have them, then ? " said Manfred.

She shook her head.

" When I said ' them ' I meant one, and I only have a copy of that, supplied me by Mr. Stedland. The one letter that was not destroyed fell into the hands of the boy's mother, who took it to the headmistress, and there was an awful row. She threatened to write to my parents, who were in India, but on my solemn promise that the acquaintance should be dropped, the affair was allowed to blow over. How the letter came into Stedland's hands I do not know ; in fact, I had never heard of the man until a week before my marriage with Jeff. Jeff had saved about two thousand pounds, and we were looking forward to our marriage day when this blow fell. A letter from a perfectly unknown man, asking me to see him at his office, gave me my first introduction to this villain. I had to take the letter with me, and I went in some curiosity, wondering why I had been sent for. I was not to wonder very long. He had a little office off Regent Street, and after he had very carefully taken away the letter he had sent me, he explained, fully and frankly, just what his summons had meant."

Manfred nodded.

" He wanted to sell you the letter," he said, " for how much ? "

" For two thousand pounds. That was the diabolical wickedness of it," said the girl, vehemently. " He knew almost to a penny how much Jeff had saved."

" Did he show you the letter ? "

She shook her head.

" No, he showed me a photographic reproduction, and as I read it and realized what construction might be put upon this perfectly innocent note, my blood went cold. There was nothing to do but to tell Jeff, because the man had threatened to send facsimiles to all our friends and to Jeffrey's uncle, who had made Jeffrey his sole heir. I had already told Jeffrey about what had happened at school, thank Heaven, and so I had no need to fear his suspicion. Jeffrey called on Mr. Stedland, and I believe there was a stormy scene ; but Stedland is a big, powerful man in spite of his age, and in the struggle which ensued poor Jeffrey got a little the worst of it. The upshot of the matter was, Jeffrey agreed to buy the letter for two thousand pounds, on condition that Stedland signed a receipt, written on a blank page of the letter itself. It meant the losing of his life savings ; it meant the possible postponement of our wedding ; but Jeffrey would not take any other course. Mr. Stedland lives in a big house near Clapham Common——"

" 184, Park View West ? " interrupted Manfred.

" You know ? " she said in surprise. " Well, it was at this house Jeffrey had to call to complete the bargain. Mr. Stedland lives alone except for a man servant, and, opening the door himself, he conducted Jeffrey up to the first floor, where he had his study. My husband, realizing the futility of argument, paid over the money, as had been directed by Stedland, in American bills."

"Which are more difficult to trace, of course," said Manfred.

"When he had paid him, Stedland produced the letter, wrote the receipt on the blank page, blotted it, and placed it in an envelope, which he gave to my husband. When Jeffrey returned home and opened the envelope, he found it contained nothing more than a blank sheet of paper."

"He had rung the changes," said Manfred.

"That was the expression that Jeffrey used," said the girl. "Then it was that Jeffrey decided to commit this mad act. You have heard of The Four Just Men?"

"I have heard of them," replied Manfred, gravely.

"My husband is a great believer in their methods, and a great admirer of them, too," she said. "I think he read everything that has ever been written about them. One night, two days after we were married—I had insisted upon marrying him at once when I discovered the situation—he came to me.

"'Grace,' he said, 'I am going to apply the methods of The Four to this devil, Stedland.'

"He outlined his plans. He had apparently been watching the house, and knew that except for the servant the man slept in the house alone, and he had formed a plan for getting in. Poor dear, he was an indifferent burglar; but you heard to-day how he succeeded in reaching Stedland's room. I think he hoped to frighten the man with his revolver."

Manfred shook his head.

"Stedland graduated as a gun-fighter in South Africa," he said, quietly. "He is the quickest man on the draw I know, and a deadly shot. Of course, he had your husband covered before he could as much as reach his pocket."

She nodded.

"That is the story," she said, quietly. "If you can help Jeff, I shall pray for you all my life."

Manfred rose slowly.

"It was a mad attempt," he said. "In the first place Stedland would not keep a compromising document like that in his house, which he leaves for six hours a day. It might even have been destroyed, though that is unlikely. He would keep the letter for future use. Blackmailers are keen students of humanity, and he knows that money may still be made from that letter of yours. But if it is in existence——"

"If it is in existence," she repeated—and now the reaction had come and her lips were trembling——

"I will place it in your hands within a week," said Manfred, and with this promise left her.

MR. NOAH STEDLAND had left the Courts of Justice that afternoon with no particular sense of satisfaction save that he was leaving it by the public entrance. He was not a man who was easily scared, but he was sensitive to impressions; and it seemed to him that the Judge's carefully chosen words had implied, less in their substance than in their tone, a veiled rebuke to himself. Beyond registering this fact his sensitiveness did not go. He was a man of comfortable fortune, and that fortune had been got together in scraps—sometimes the scraps were unusually large—by the exercise of qualities which were not handicapped by such imponderable factors as conscience or remorse. Life to this tall, broad-shouldered, grey-faced man was a game, and Jeffrey Storr, against whom he harboured no resentment, was a loser.

He could think dispassionately of Storr in his convict clothes, wearing out the years of agony in a convict prison, and at the mental picture could experience no other emotion than that of the successful gambler who can watch his rival's ruin with equanimity.

He let himself into his narrow-fronted house, closed and double-locked the door behind him, and went up the shabbily carpeted stairs to his study. The ghosts of the lives he had wrecked should have crowded the room; but Mr. Stedland did not believe in ghosts. He rubbed his finger along a mahogany table and noted that it was dusty, and the ghost of a well-paid charlady took shape from that moment.

As he sprawled back in his chair, a big cigar between his gold-spotted teeth, he tried to analyse the queer sensation he had experienced in court. It was not the Judge, it was not the attitude of the defending counsel, it was not even the possibility that the world might censure him, which was responsible for his mental perturbation. It was certainly not the prisoner and his possible fate, or the white-faced wife. And yet there had been a something or a somebody which had set him glancing uneasily over his shoulder.

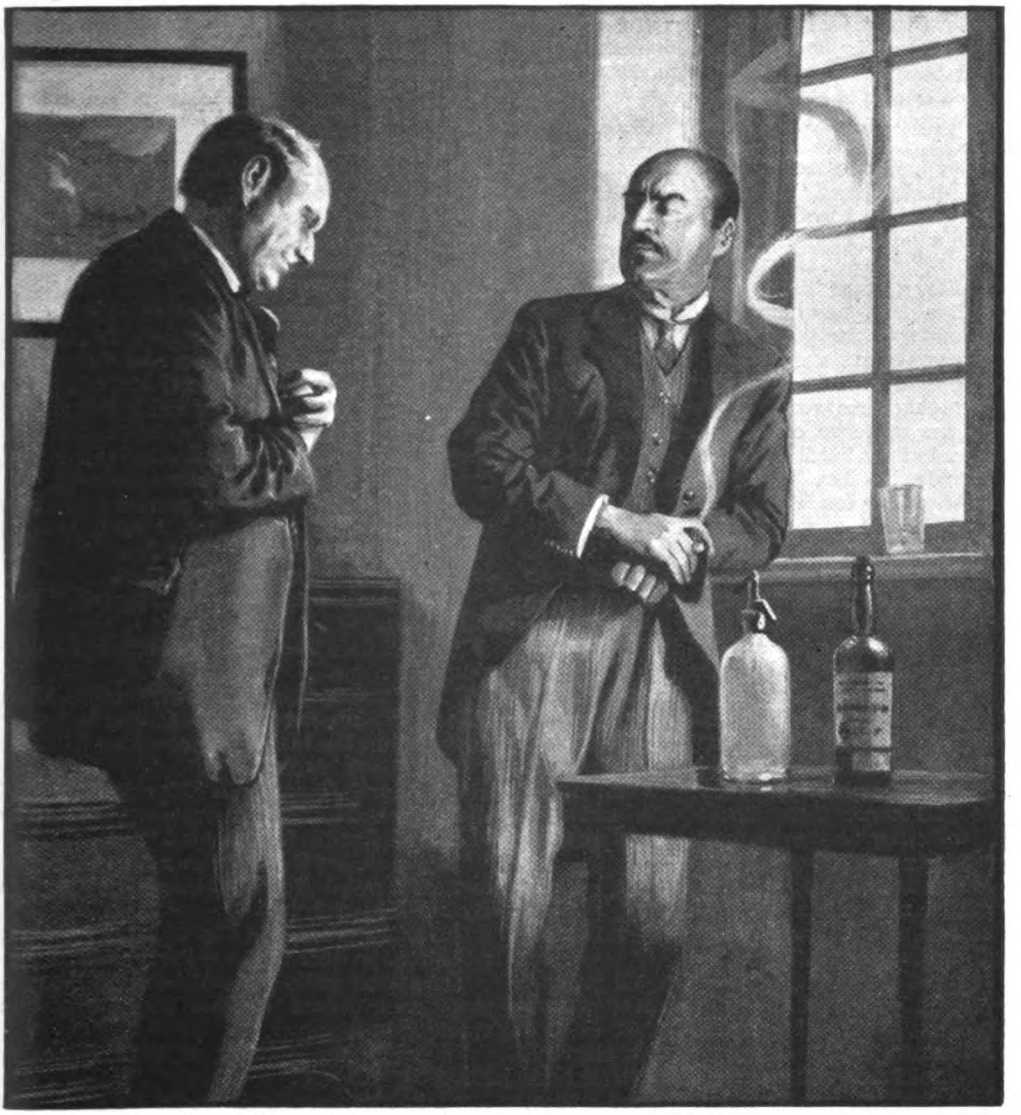
He sat smoking for half an hour, and then a bell clanged and he went down the stairs and opened the front door. The man who was waiting with an apologetic smile on his face, a jackal of his, was butler and tout and general errand-boy to the hard-faced man.

"Come in, Jope," he said, closing the door behind the visitor. "Go down to the cellar and get me a bottle of whisky."

"How was my evidence, guv'nor?" asked the sycophant, smirking expectantly.

"Rotten!" growled Stedland. "What did you mean by saying you heard me call for help?"

"Well, guv'nor, I thought I'd make it a little worse for him," said Jope, humbly.



"'Yes,' said Stedland, 'we've been together a long time now. In fact, you would almost have finished your sentence if I had told the police what I knew about you seven years ago ——'"

"Help!" sneered Mr. Stedland. "Do you think I'd call on a guy like you for help? A lot of use you would be in a rough house! Get that whisky!"

When the man came up with a bottle and a siphon, Mr. Stedland was gazing moodily out of the window, which looked upon a short, untidy garden terminating in a high wall. Behind that was a space on which a building had been in course of erection when the armistice put an end to Government work. It was designed as a small factory for the making of fuses, and was an eyesore to Mr. Stedland, since he owned the ground on which it was built.

"Jope," he said, turning suddenly, "was there anybody in court we know?"

"No, Mr. Stedland," said the man, pausing in surprise. "Not that I know, except Inspector——"

"Never mind about the inspector," answered Mr. Stedland, impatiently. "I know all the splits who were there. Was there anybody else—anybody who has a grudge against us?"

"No, Mr. Stedland. What does it

matter if there was ? " asked the valorous Jope. "I think we're a match for any of 'em."

" How long have we been in partnership ? " asked Stedland unpleasantly, as he poured himself out a tot of whisky.

The man's face twisted in an ingratiating smile.

" Well, we've been together some time now, Mr. Stedland," he said.

Stedland smacked his lips and looked out of the window again.

" Yes," he said after a while, " we've been together a long time now. In fact, you would almost have finished your sentence if I had told the police what I knew about you seven years ago——"

The man winced, and changed the subject. He might have realized, had he thought, that the sentence of seven years had been commuted by Stedland to a sentence of life servitude, but Mr. Jope was no thinker.

" Anything for the bank to-day, sir ? " he asked.

" Don't be a fool," said Stedland. " The bank closed at three. Now, Jope," he turned on the other, " in future you sleep in the kitchen."

" In the kitchen, sir ? " said the astonished servant, and Stedland nodded.

" I'm taking no more risks of a night visitor," he said. " That fellow was on me before I knew where I was, and if I hadn't had a gun handy he would have beaten me. The kitchen is the only way you can break into this house from the outside, and I've got a feeling at the back of my mind that something might happen."

" But he's gone to jail."

" I'm not talking about him," snarled Stedland. " Do you understand ?—take your bed to the kitchen."

" It's a bit draughty——" began Jope.

" Take your bed to the kitchen ! " roared Stedland, glaring at the man.

" Certainly, sir," said Jope, with alacrity.

When his servant had gone, Stedland took off his coat and put on one of stained alpaca, unlocked the safe, and took out a book. It was a pass-book from his bank, and its study was very gratifying. Mr. Stedland dreamed dreams of a South American ranch and a life of ease and quiet. Twelve years' strenuous work in London had made him a comparatively rich man. He had worked cautiously and patiently, and had pursued the business of blackmail in a business-like manner. His cash balance was with one of the best known of the private bankers, Sir William Molbury and Co., Ltd. Molbury's Bank had a reputation in the City for the privacy and even mystery which enveloped the business of its clients—a circumstance which suited Mr. Stedland admirably. It was, too, one of those old-fashioned banks which maintain a huge reserve of money in its vaults ; and this was also a recommendation to Mr. Stedland, who might wish to gather in his fluid assets in the shortest possible space of time.

THE evening and the night passed without any untoward incident, except as was revealed when Mr. Jope brought his master's tea in the morning, and told, somewhat hoarsely, of a cold and unpleasant night.

" Get more bedclothes," said Stedland, curtly.

He went off to his City office after breakfast, and left Mr. Jope to superintend the operations of the charwoman and to impress upon her a number of facts, including the high rate at which she was paid, the glut of good charwomen on the market, and the consequences which would overtake her if she left Mr. Stedland's study undusted.

At eleven o'clock that morning came a respectable and somewhat elderly-looking gentleman in a silk hat, and him Mr. Jope interviewed on the doormat.

" I've come from the Safe Deposit," said the visitor.

" What Safe Deposit ? " asked the suspicious Mr. Jope.

" The Fetter Lane Deposit," replied the other. " We want to know if you left your keys behind the last time you came ? "

Jope shook his head.

" We haven't any Safe Deposit," he said with assurance, " and the governor's hardly likely to leave his keys behind."

" Then evidently I've come to the wrong house," smiled the gentleman. " This is Mr. Smithson's ? "

" No, it ain't," said the ungracious Jope, and shut the door in the caller's face.

The visitor walked down the steps into the street and joined another man who was standing at a corner.

" They know nothing of Safe Deposits, Manfred," he said.

" I hardly thought it would be at a Safe Deposit," said the taller of the two. " In fact, I was pretty certain that he would keep all his papers at the bank. You saw the man Jope, I suppose ? "

" Yes," said Gonsalez, dreamily. " An interesting face. The chin weak, but the ears quite normal. The frontal bones slope irregularly backward, and the head, so far as I can see, is distinctly oxycephalic."

" Poor Jope ! " said Manfred, without a smile. " And now, Leon, you and I will devote our attention to the weather. There is an anticyclone coming up from the Bay of Biscay, and its beneficent effects are already felt in Eastbourne. If it extends northward to London in the next three days we shall have good news for Mrs. Storr."

"I suppose," said Gonsalez, as they were travelling back to their rooms in Jermyn Street, "I suppose there is no possibility of rushing this fellow?"

Manfred shook his head.

"I do not wish to die," he said, "and die I certainly should, for Noah Stedland is unpleasantly quick to shoot."

Manfred's prophecy was fulfilled two days later, when the influence of the anticyclone spread to London and a thin yellow mist descended on the city. It lifted in the afternoon, Manfred saw to his satisfaction, but gave no evidence of dispersing before nightfall.

Mr. Stedland's office in Regent Street was small but comfortably furnished. On the glass door beneath his name was inscribed the magic word "Financier," and it is true that Stedland was registered as a moneylender and found it a profitable business; for what Stedland the moneylender discovered, Stedland the blackmailer exploited, and it was not an unusual circumstance for Mr. Stedland to lend at heavy interest money which was destined for his own pocket. In this way he could obtain a double grip upon his victim.

At half-past two that afternoon his clerk announced a caller.

"Man or woman?"

"A man, sir," said the clerk. "I think he's from Molbury's Bank."

"Do you know him?" asked Stedland.

"No, sir, but he came in while you were out, and asked if you'd received the bank's balance-sheet."

Mr. Stedland took a cigar from a box on the table and lit it.

"Show him in," he said, anticipating nothing more exciting than a dishonoured cheque from one of his clients.

The man who came in was obviously in a state of agitation. He closed the door behind him and stood nervously fingering his hat.

"Sit down," said Stedland. "Have a cigar, Mr. ——"

"Curtis, sir," said the other, huskily. "Thank you, sir, I don't smoke."

"Well, what do you want?" asked Stedland.

"I want a few minutes' conversation with you, sir, of a private character." He glanced apprehensively at the glass partition which separated Mr. Stedland's office from the little den in which his clerks worked.

"Don't worry," said Stedland, humorously. "I can guarantee that screen is sound-proof. What's your trouble?"

He scented a temporary embarrassment, and a bank clerk temporarily embarrassed might make a very useful tool for future use.

"I hardly know how to begin, Mr. Stedland," said the man, seating himself on the edge of a chair, his face twitching nervously. "It's a terrible story, a terrible story."

STEDLAND had heard about these terrible stories before, and sometimes they meant no more than that the visitor was threatened with bailiffs and was anxious to keep the news from the ears of his employers, sometimes the confession was more serious—money lost in gambling, and a desperate eleventh-hour attempt to make good a financial deficiency.

"Go on," he said. "You won't shock *me!*"

The boast was a little premature, however.

"It's not about myself, but about my brother, John Curtis, who's been cashier for twenty years, sir," said the man, nervously. "I hadn't the slightest idea that he was in difficulties, but he was gambling on the Stock Exchange, and only to-day he has told me the news. I am in terrible distress about him, sir. I fear suicide. He is a nervous wreck."

"What has he done?" asked Stedland, impatiently.

"He has robbed the bank, sir," said the man, in a hushed voice. "It wouldn't matter if it had happened two years ago, but now, when things have been going so badly and we've had to stretch a point to make our balance-sheet plausible, I shudder to think what the results will be."

"Of how much has he robbed the bank?" asked Stedland, quickly.

"A hundred and fifty thousand pounds," was the staggering reply; and Stedland jumped to his feet.

"A hundred and fifty thousand pounds?" he said, incredulously.

"Yes, sir. I was wondering whether you could speak for him; you are one of the most highly-respected clients of the bank!"

"Speak for him!" shouted Stedland, and then of a sudden he became cool. His quick brain went over the situation, reviewing every possibility. He looked up at the clock. It was a quarter to three.

"Does anybody in the bank know?"

"Not yet, sir; but I feel it is my duty to the general manager to tell him the tragic story. After the bank closes this afternoon I am asking him to see me privately and——"

"Are you going back to the bank now?" asked Stedland.

"Yes, sir," said the man, in surprise.

"Listen to me, my friend." Stedland's grey face was set and tense. He took a case from his pocket, opened it, and extracted two notes. "Here are two notes for fifty," he said. "Take those and go home."

"But I've got to go to the bank, sir. They will wonder ——"

"Never mind what they wonder," said Stedland. "You'll have a very good explanation when the truth comes out. Will you do this?"

"Yes, sir," said the shaking Curtis.

Five minutes later Mr. Stedland passed through the glass doors of Molbury's Bank and walked straight to the counter. An air of calm pervaded the establishment, and the cashier, who knew Stedland, came forward with a smile.

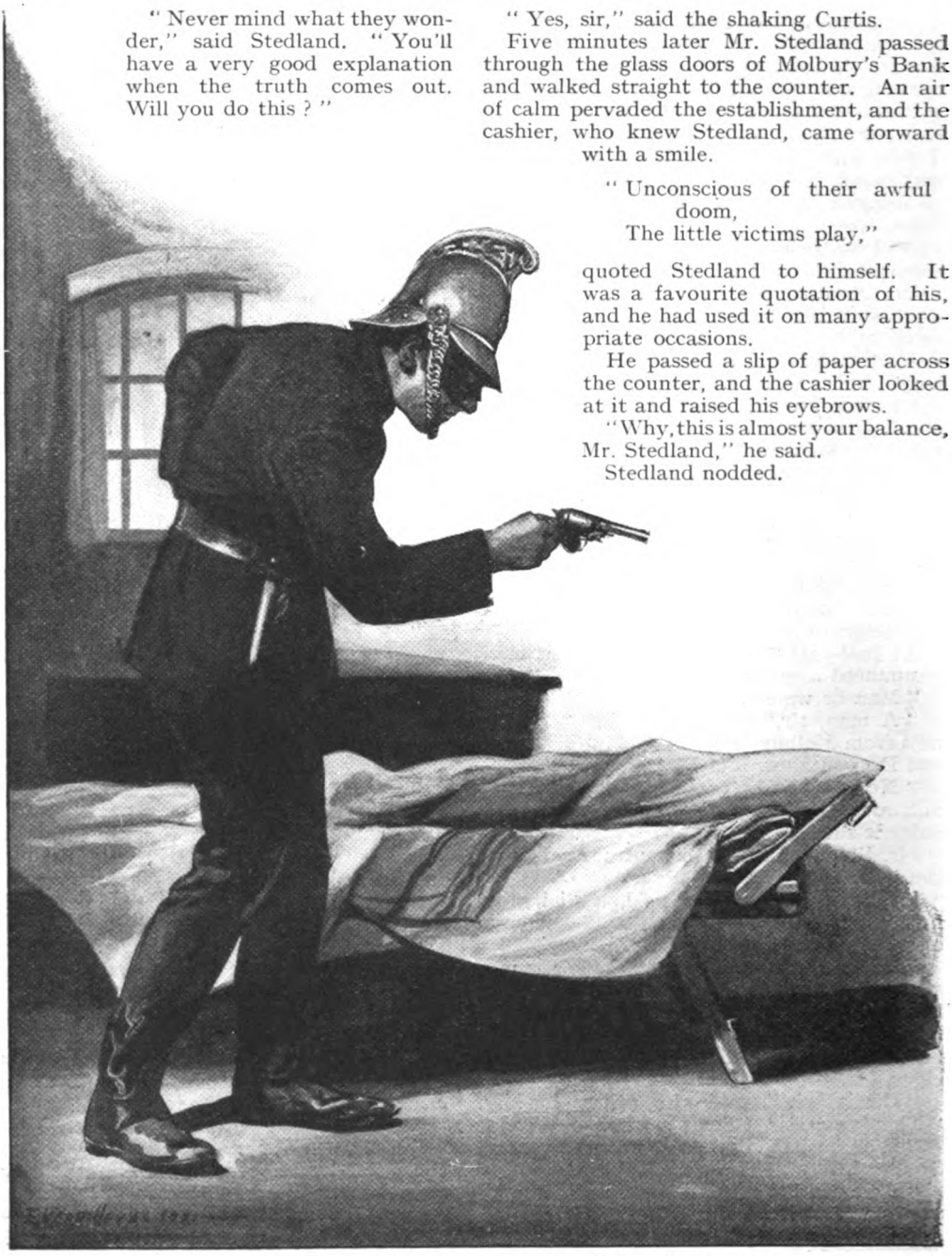
"Unconscious of their awful doom,
The little victims play,"

quoted Stedland to himself. It was a favourite quotation of his, and he had used it on many appropriate occasions.

He passed a slip of paper across the counter, and the cashier looked at it and raised his eyebrows.

"Why, this is almost your balance, Mr. Stedland," he said.

Stedland nodded.



"'Put up your hands,' said the fireman, 'and don't

The man took up the money reluctantly.

"I don't quite know what you ——"

"Never mind what I want to do," snapped Stedland. "That is to keep your mouth shut and go home. Do you understand plain English?"

"Yes, I am going abroad in a hurry," he said. "I shall not be back for two years, but I am leaving just enough to keep the account running."

It was a boast of Molbury's that they never argued on such occasions as these.

" Then you will want your box ? " said the cashier, politely.

" If you please," said Mr. Noah Stedland. If the bank passed into the hands of the Receiver, he had no wish for prying strangers to be unlocking and examining the contents of the tin box he had deposited with the bank, and to the contents of which he made additions from time to time.

Ten minutes later, with close on a hundred thousand pounds in his pockets, a tin box in one hand, the other resting on his hip pocket —for he took no chances—Mr. Stedland went out again on the street and into the waiting taxicab. The fog was cleared, and the sun was shining at Clapham when he arrived.

He went straight up to his study, fastened the door, and unlocked the little safe. Into this he pushed the small box and two thick bundles of notes, locking the safe door behind him. Then he rang for the faithful Jope, unfastening the door to admit him.

" Have we another camp bed in the house?" he asked.

" Yes, sir," said Jope.

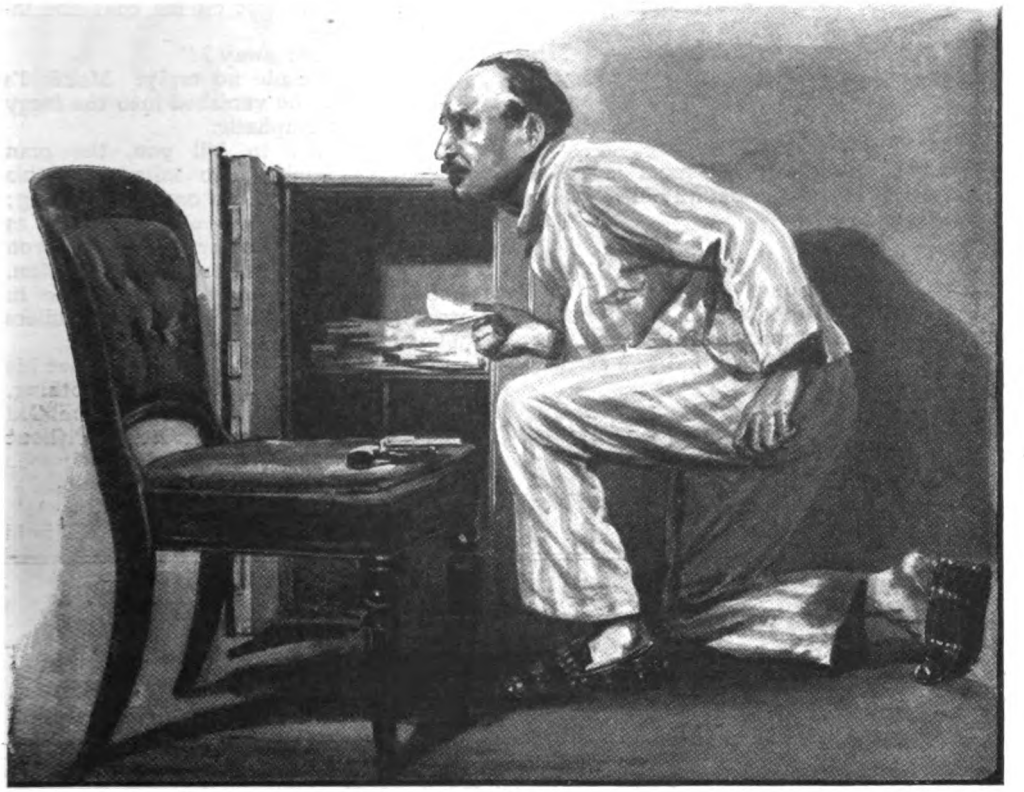
" Well, bring it up here. I am going to sleep in my study to-night."

" Anything wrong, sir ? "

" Don't ask jackass questions. Do as you're told ! "

To-morrow, he thought, he would seek out a safer repository for his treasures. He spent that evening in his study and lay down to rest, but not to sleep, with a revolver on a chair by the side of his camp bed. Mr. Stedland was a cautious man. Despite his intention to dispense with sleep for one night, he was dozing when a sound in the street outside roused him.

It was a familiar sound—the clang of fire bells—and apparently fire engines were in the street, for he heard the whine of motors and the sound of voices. He sniffed ; there was a strong smell of burning, and looking up he saw a flicker of light reflected on the ceiling. He sprang out of bed to discover the cause. It was immediately discernible, for the fuse factory was burning merrily, and he caught a glimpse of firemen at work and a momentary vision of a hose in action. Mr. Stedland permitted himself to smile. That



make trouble. I'd just as soon kill you as talk to you.' "

fire would be worth money to him, and there was no danger to himself.

And then he heard a sound in the hall below; a deep voice boomed an order, and he caught the chatter of Jope, and unlocked the door. The lights were burning in the hall and on the stairway. Looking over the banisters he saw the shivering Jope, with an overcoat over his pyjamas, expostulating with a helmeted fireman.

"I can't help it," the latter was saying. "I've got to get a hose through one of these houses, and it might as well be yours."

Mr. Stedland had no desire to have a hose through his house, and thought he knew an argument which might pass the inconvenience on to his neighbour.

"Just come up here a moment," he said. "I want to speak to one of those firemen."

The fireman came clumping up the stairs in his heavy boots, a fine figure of a man in his glittering brass.

"Sorry," he said, "but I must get the hose——"

"Wait a moment, my friend," said Mr. Stedland with a smile. "I think you will understand me after a while. There are plenty of houses in this road, and a tenner goes a long way, eh? Come in."

He walked back into his room and the fireman followed and stood watching as he unlocked the safe.

Then:

"I didn't think it would be so easy," he said.

Stedland swung round.

"Put up your hands," said the fireman, "and don't make trouble, or you're going out, Noah. I'd just as soon kill you as talk to you."

Then Noah Stedland saw that beneath the shade of the helmet the man's face was covered with a black mask.

"Who—who are you?" he asked, hoarsely.

"I'm one of The Four Just Men—greatly reviled and prematurely mourned. Death is my favourite panacea for all ills."

At nine o'clock in the morning Mr. Noah Stedland still sat biting his nails, a cold, uneaten breakfast spread on a table before him.

To him came Mr. Jope wailing tidings of disaster, interrupted by Chief Inspector Holloway and a hefty subordinate who followed the servant into the room.

"Coming for a little walk with me, Stedland?" asked the cheery inspector, and Stedland rose heavily.

"What's the charge?" he asked, heavily.

"Blackmail," replied the officer. "We've got evidence enough to hang you—delivered by special messenger. You fixed that case against Storr, too—naughty, naughty!"

As Mr. Stedland put on his coat the inspector asked:—

"Who gave you away?"

Mr. Stedland made no reply. Manfred's last words before he vanished into the foggy street had been emphatic.

"If we wanted to kill you, the man called Curtis would have killed you this afternoon when we played on your cunning; we could have killed you as easily as we set fire to the factory. And if you talk to the police of The Four Just Men, we will kill you, even though you be in Pentonville with a regiment of soldiers round you."

And somehow Mr. Stedland knew that his enemy spoke the truth. So he said nothing, neither there, nor in the dock at the Old Bailey, and went to penal servitude without speaking.

(Another Adventure of The Four Just Men will appear next month.)

RESULT OF THE "MISTAKES" COMPETITION.

NEARLY six thousand readers competed for the prizes offered in a recent issue for the discovery of the greatest number of mistakes in Mr. Barry Pain's story, "A New Comedy of Errors." The prizes have been awarded as follows:

First Prize of £25.

Horace Ransom Bigelow, Balliol College, Oxford.

Six other prizes, consisting of Newnes' Library Edition of H. G. Wells's "Outline of History":

Henry Anderson, 70, Wanstead Park Road, Ilford.
M. Andrew, 29, Welton Mount, Hyde Park, Leeds.
George Findlay, Brailes, Banbury.
F. J. Kittermaster, 3, Barby Road, Rugby.
Miss M. D. Symonds, Sunnyside, Woodland Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex.
E. G. Harmer, Teesdale, Egmont Road, Sutton, Surrey.

THE COMING OF GOWF

by

P.G.WODEHOUSE

Illustrated by G·MORROW

PROLOGUE.

AFTER we had sent in our card and waited for a few hours in the marbled ante-room, a bell rang and the major-domo, parting the priceless curtains, ushered us in to where the editor sat writing at his desk. We advanced on all fours, knocking our head reverently on the Aubusson carpet.

"Well?" he said at length, laying down his jewelled pen.

"We just looked in," we said, humbly, "to ask if it would be all right if we sent you an historical story."

"The public does not want historical stories," he said, frowning coldly.

"Ah, but the public hasn't seen one of ours!" we replied.

The editor placed a cigarette in a holder presented to him by a reigning monarch, and lit it with a match from a golden box, the gift of the millionaire president of the Amalgamated League of Working Plumbers.

"What this magazine requires," he said, "is red-blooded, one-hundred-per-cent. dynamic stuff, palpitating with warm human interest and containing a strong, poignant love-motive."

"That," we replied, "is us all over, Mabel."

"What I need at the moment, however, is a golf story."

"By a singular coincidence, ours is a golf story."

"Ha! say you so?" said the editor, a flicker of interest passing over his finely-chiselled features. "Then you may let me see it."

He kicked us in the face, and we withdrew.

THE STORY.

ON the broad terrace outside his palace, overlooking the fair expanse of the Royal gardens, King Merolchazzar of Oom stood leaning on the low parapet, his chin in his hand and a frown on his noble face. The day was fine, and a light breeze bore up to him from the garden below a fragrant scent of flowers. But, for all the pleasure it seemed to give him, it might have been bone-fertilizer.

The fact is, King Merolchazzar was in love, and his suit was not prospering. Enough to upset any man.

Royal love affairs in those days were conducted on the correspondence system. A monarch, hearing good reports of a neighbouring princess, would dispatch messengers with gifts to her Court, beseeching an interview. The Princess would name a date, and a formal meeting would take place: after which everything usually buzzed along pretty smoothly. But in the case of King Merolchazzar's courtship of the Princess of the

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Outer Isles there had been a regrettable hitch. She had acknowledged the gifts, saying that they were just what she had wanted and how had he guessed, and had added that, as regarded a meeting, she would let him know later. Since that day no word had come from her, and a gloomy spirit prevailed in the capital. At the Courtiers' Club, the meeting-place of the aristocracy of Oom, five to one in *pazazas* was freely offered against Merol-chazzar's chances, but found no takers; while in the taverns of the common people, where less conservative odds were always to be had, you could get a snappy hundred to eight. "For in good sooth," writes a chronicler of the time on a half-brick and a couple of paving-stones which have survived to this day, "it did indeed begin to appear as though our beloved monarch, the son of the sun and the nephew of the moon, had been handed the bitter fruit of the citron."

The quaint old idiom is almost untrans-latable, but one sees what he means.

AS the King stood sombrely surveying the garden, his attention was attracted by a small, bearded man with bushy eye-brows and a face like a walnut, who stood not far away on a gravelled path flanked by rose bushes. For some minutes he eyed this man in silence, then he called to the Grand Vizier, who was standing in the little group of courtiers and officials at the other end of the terrace. The bearded man, apparently unconscious of the Royal scrutiny, had placed a rounded stone on the gravel, and was standing beside it making curious passes over it with his hoe. It was this singular behaviour that had attracted the King's attention. Superficially it seemed silly, and yet Merol-chazzar had a curious feeling that there was a deep, even a holy, meaning behind the action.

"Who," he inquired, "is that?"

"He is one of your Majesty's gardeners," replied the Vizier.

"I don't remember seeing him before. Who is he?"

The Vizier was a kind-hearted man, and he hesitated for a moment.

"It seems a hard thing to say of anyone, your Majesty," he replied, "but he is a Scotchman. One of your Majesty's invincible admirals recently made a raid on the in-hospitable coast of that country at a spot known to the natives as S'nandrews, and brought away this man."

"What does he think he's doing?" asked the King, as the bearded one slowly raised the hoe above his right shoulder, slightly bending the left knee as he did so.

"It is some species of savage religious ceremony, your Majesty. According to the admiral, the dunes by the seashore where he landed were covered with a multitude of men behaving just as this man is doing. They had sticks in their hands, and they struck with these at small round objects. And every now and again——"

"Fo-o-ore!" called a gruff voice from below.

"And every now and again," went on the Vizier, "they would utter the strange, melancholy cry which you have just heard. It is a species of chant."

The Vizier broke off. The hoe had descended on the stone, and the stone, rising in a graceful arc, had sailed through the air and fallen within a foot of where the King stood.

"Hi!" exclaimed the Vizier.

The man looked up.

"You mustn't do that! You nearly hit his serene graciousness the King!"

"Mphm!" said the bearded man, non-chalantly, and began to wave his hoe mystically over another stone.

Into the King's careworn face there had crept a look of interest, almost of excitement.

"What god does he hope to propitiate by these rites?" he asked.

"The deity, I learn from your Majesty's admiral, is called Gowf."

"Gowf? Gowf?" King Merolchazzar ran over in his mind the muster-roll of the gods of Oom. There were sixty-seven of them, but Gowf was not of their number. "It is a strange religion," he murmured. "A strange religion, indeed. But, by Belus, distinctly attractive. I have an idea that Oom could do with a religion like that. It has a zip to it. A sort of fascination, if you know what I mean. It looks to me extra-ordinarily like what the Court physician ordered. I will talk to this fellow and learn more of these holy ceremonies."

And, followed by the Vizier, the King made his way into the garden. The Vizier was now in a state of some apprehension. He was exercised in his mind as to the effect which the embracing of a new religion by the King might have on the formidable Church party. It would be certain to cause displeasure among the priesthood: and in those days it was a ticklish business to offend the priest-hood, even for a monarch. And, if Merol-chazzar had a fault, it was a tendency to be a little tactless in his dealings with that powerful body. Only a few mornings back the High Priest of Hec had taken the Vizier aside to complain about the quality of the meat which the King had been using lately for his sacrifices. He might be a child in worldly matters, said the High Priest, but if the King supposed that he did not know the difference between home-grown domestic and frozen imported foreign, it was time his Majesty was disabused of the idea. If, on top of this little unpleasantness, King

"The first golf lesson ever seen in the kingdom of Oom had begun."

Merolchazzar were to become an adherent of this new Gowf, the Vizier did not know what might not happen.

The King stood beside the bearded foreigner, watching him closely. The second stone soared neatly on to the terrace. Merolchazzar uttered an excited cry. His eyes were glowing, and he breathed quickly.

"It doesn't look difficult," he muttered.

"Hoots!" said the bearded man.

"I believe I could do it," went on the King, feverishly. "By the eight green gods of the mountain, I believe I could! By the holy fire that burns night and day before the altar of Belus, I'm *sure* I could! By Hec, I'm going to do it now! Gimme that hoe!"

"Toots!" said the bearded man.

It seemed to the King that the fellow spoke derisively, and his blood boiled angrily. He seized the hoe and raised it above his shoulder, bracing himself solidly on widely-parted feet. His pose was an exact reproduction of the one in which the Court sculptor had depicted him when working on the life-size statue ("Our Athletic King") which stood in the principal square of the city; but it did not impress the stranger. He uttered a discordant laugh.

"Ye puir gonuph!" he cried, "whit kin' o' a staunce is that?"

The king was hurt. Hitherto the attitude had been generally admired.

"It's the way I always stand when killing lions," he said. "'In killing lions,'" he added, quoting from the well-known treatise of Nimrod, the recognized text-book on the sport, "'the weight at the top of the swing should be evenly balanced on both feet.'"

"Ah, weel, ye're no killing lions the noo. Ye're gowfing."

A sudden humility descended upon the King. He felt, as so many men were to feel in similar circumstances in ages to come, as though he were a child looking eagerly for guidance to an all-wise master—a child, moreover, handicapped by water on the brain, feet three sizes too large for him, and hands consisting mainly of thumbs.

"O thou of noble ancestors and agreeable disposition!" he said, humbly. "Teach me the true way."

"Use the interlocking grup and keep the staunce a wee bit open and slow back, and dinna press or sway the heid and keep yer e'e on the ba'."

"My which on the what?" said the King, bewildered.

"I fancy, your Majesty," hazarded the Vizier, "that he is respectfully suggesting that your serene graciousness should deign to keep your eye on the ball."

"Oh ah!" said the King.

The first golf lesson ever seen in the kingdom of Oom had begun.

UP on the terrace, meanwhile, in the little group of courtiers and officials, a whispered consultation was in progress. Officially, the King's unfortunate love affair was supposed to be a strict secret. But you know how it is. These things get about. The Grand Vizier tells the Lord High Chamberlain; the Lord High Chamberlain whispers it in confidence to the Supreme Hereditary Custodian of the Royal Pet Dog; the Supreme Hereditary Custodian hands it on to the Exalted Overseer of the King's Wardrobe on the understanding that it is to go no farther; and, before you know where you are, the varlets and scurvy knaves are gossiping about it in the kitchens, and the Society journalists have started to carve it out on bricks for the next issue of *Palace Prattlings*.

"The long and short of it is," said the Exalted Overseer of the King's Wardrobe, "we must cheer him up."

There was a murmur of approval. In those days of easy executions it was no light matter that a monarch should be a prey to gloom.

"But how?" queried the Lord High Chamberlain.

"I know," said the Supreme Hereditary Custodian of the Royal Pet Dog. "Try him with the minstrels."

"Here! Why us?" protested the leader of the minstrels.

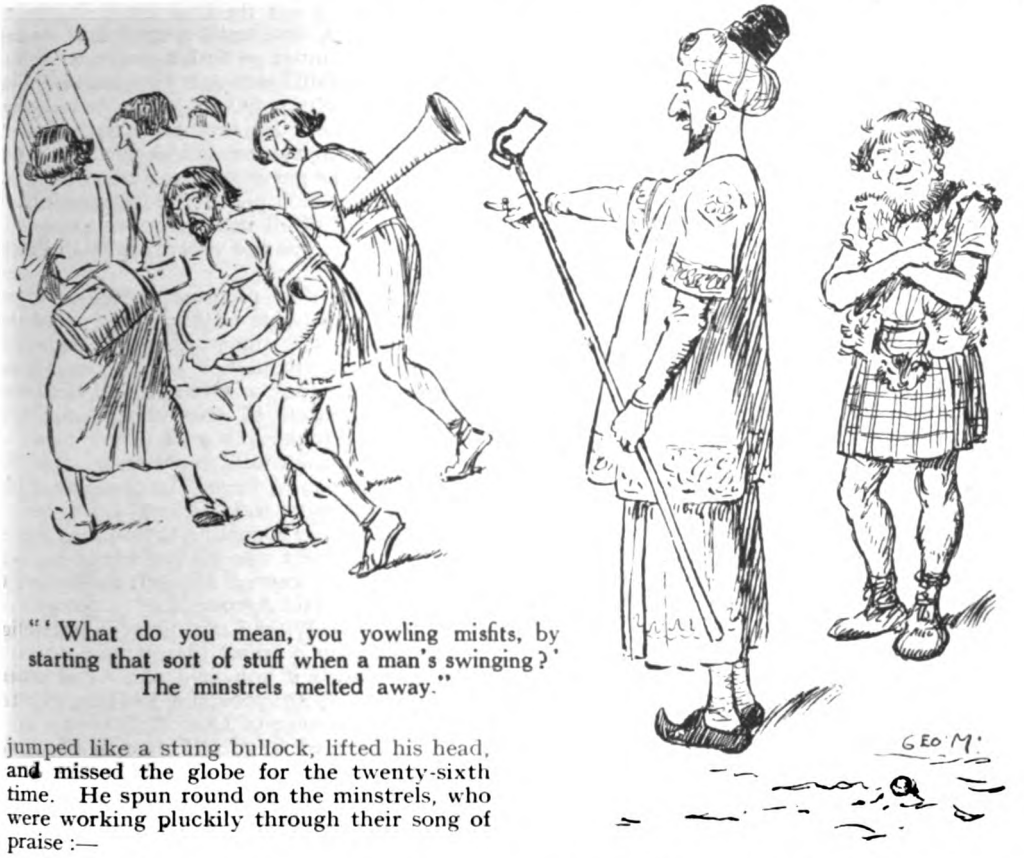
"Don't be silly!" said the Lord High Chamberlain. "It's for your good just as much as ours. He was asking only last night why he never got any music nowadays. He told me to find out whether you supposed he paid you simply to eat and sleep, because if so he knew what to do about it."

"Oh, in that case!" The leader of the minstrels started nervously. Collecting his assistants and tip-toeing down the garden, he took up his stand a few feet in Merolchazzar's rear, just as that much-enduring monarch, after twenty-five futile attempts, was once more addressing his stone.

Lyric writers in those days had not reached the supreme pitch of excellence which has been produced by modern musical comedy. The art was in its infancy then, and the best the minstrels could do was this—and they did it just as Merolchazzar, raising the hoe with painful care, reached the top of his swing and started down:—

"Oh, tune the string and let us sing
Our godlike, great, and glorious King!
He's a bear! He's a bear! He's a bear!"

There were sixteen more verses, touching on their ruler's prowess in the realms of sport and war, but they were not destined to be sung on that circuit. King Merolchazzar



"'What do you mean, you yowling misfits, by starting that sort of stuff when a man's swinging?' The minstrels melted away."

jumped like a stung bullock, lifted his head, and missed the globe for the twenty-sixth time. He spun round on the minstrels, who were working pluckily through their song of praise :—

"Oh, may his triumphs never cease!
He has the strength of ten!
First in war, first in peace,
First in the hearts of his countrymen!"

"Get out!" roared the King.

"Your Majesty?," quavered the leader of the minstrels.

"Make a noise like an egg and beat it!" (Again one finds the chronicler's idiom impossible to reproduce in modern speech, and must be content with a literal translation.) "By the bones of my ancestors, it's a little hard! By the beard of the Sacred Goat, it's tough! What in the name of Belus and Hec do you mean, you yowling misfits, by starting that sort of stuff when a man's swinging? I was just shaping to hit it right that time when you butted in, you——"

The minstrels melted away. The bearded man patted the fermenting monarch paternally on the shoulder.

"Ma mannie," he said, "ye may no' be a gowfer yet, but hoots! ye're learning the language fine!"

King Merolchazzar's fury died away. He simpered modestly at these words of commendation, the first his bearded preceptor had uttered. With exemplary patience he turned to address the stone for the twenty-seventh time.

That night it was all over the city that the King had gone crazy over a new religion, and the orthodox shook their heads.

WE of the present day, living in the midst of a million marvels of a complex civilization, have learned to adjust ourselves to conditions and to take for granted phenomena which in an earlier and less advanced age would have caused the profoundest excitement and even alarm. We accept without comment the telephone, the automobile, and the wireless telegraph, and we are unmoved by the spectacle of our fellow human beings in the grip of the first stages of golf fever. Far otherwise was it with the courtiers and officials about the Palace of Oom. The obsession of the King was the sole topic of conversation.

Every day now, starting forth at dawn and returning only with the falling of darkness, Merolchazzar was out on the Linx, as the outdoor temple of the new god was

called. In a luxurious house adjoining this expanse the bearded Scotchman had been installed, and there he could be found at almost any hour of the day fashioning out of holy wood the weird implements indispensable to the new religion. As a recognition of his services, the King had bestowed upon him a large pension, innumerable *kaddiz* or slaves, and the title of Promoter of the King's Happiness, which for the sake of convenience was generaly shortened to The Pro.

At present, Oom being a conservative country, the worship of the new god had not attracted the public in great numbers. In fact, except for the Grand Vizier, who, always a faithful follower of his sovereign's fortunes, had taken to Gowf from the start, the courtiers held aloof to a man. But the Vizier had thrown himself into the new worship with such vigour and earnestness that it was not long before he won from the King the title of Supreme Splendiferous Maintainer of the Twenty-Four Handicap Except on Windy Days when It Goes Up to Thirty—a title which in ordinary conversation was usually abbreviated to The Dub.

All these new titles, it should be said, were, as far as the courtiers were concerned, a fruitful source of discontent. There were black looks and mutinous whispers. The laws of precedence were being disturbed, and the courtiers did not like it. It jars a man who for years has had his social position all cut and dried—a man, to take an instance at random, who, as Second Deputy Shiner of the Royal Hunting Boots, knows that his place is just below the Keeper of the Eel-Hounds and just above the Second Tenor of the Corps of Minstrels—it jars him, we say, to find suddenly that he has got to go down a step in favour of the Hereditary Bearer of the King's Baffy.

But it was from the priesthood that the real, serious opposition was to be expected. And the priests of the sixty-seven gods of Oom were up in arms. As the white-bearded High Priest of Hec, who by virtue of his office was generally regarded as leader of the guild, remarked in a glowing speech at an extraordinary meeting of the Priests' Equity Association, he had always set his face against the principle of the Closed Shop hitherto, but there were moments when every thinking man had to admit that enough was sufficient, and it was his opinion that such a moment had now arrived. The cheers which greeted the words showed how correctly he had voiced popular sentiment.

OF all those who had listened to the High Priest's speech, none had listened more intently than the King's half-brother, Ascobaruch. A sinister, disappointed man, this Ascobaruch, with mean eyes and a crafty smile. All his life he had been consumed with ambition, and until now it had looked as though he must go to his grave with this ambition unfulfilled. All his life he had wanted to be King of Oom, and now he began to see daylight. He was sufficiently versed in Court intrigues to be aware that the priests were the party that really counted, the source from which all successful revolutions sprang. And of all the priests the one that mattered most was the venerable High Priest of Hec.

It was to this prelate, therefore, that Ascobaruch made his way at the close of the proceedings. The meeting had dispersed after passing a unanimous vote of censure on King Merolchazzar, and the High Priest was refreshing himself in the Vestry—for the meeting had taken place in the Temple of Hec—with a small milk and honey.

" Some speech ! " began Ascobaruch in his unpleasant, crafty way. None knew better than he the art of appealing to human vanity.

The High Priest was plainly gratified.

" Oh, I don't know," he said, modestly.

" Yessir ! " said Ascobaruch. " Considerable oration ! What I can never understand is how you think up all these things to say. I couldn't do it if you paid me. The other night I had to propose the Visitors at the Old Alumni dinner of Oom University, and my mind seemed to go all blank. But you just stand up and the words come fluttering out of you like bees out of a barn. I simply cannot understand it. The thing gets past me."

" Oh, it's just a knack."

" A divine gift, I should call it."

" Perhaps you're right," said the High Priest, finishing his milk and honey. He was wondering why he had never realized before what a capital fellow Ascobaruch was.

" Of course," went on Ascobaruch, " you had an excellent subject. I mean to say, inspiring and all that. Why, by Hec, even I—though, of course, I couldn't have approached your level—even I could have done something with a subject like that. I mean, going off and worshipping a new god no one has ever heard of. I tell you, my blood fairly boiled. Nobody has a greater respect and esteem for Merolchazzar than I have, but I mean to say, what ! Not right, I mean, going off worshipping gods no one has ever heard of ! I'm a peaceable man, and I've made it a rule never to mix in politics, but if you happened to say to me as we were sitting here, just as one reasonable man to another—if you happened to say, ' Ascobaruch, I think it's time that definite steps were taken,' I should reply frankly, ' My dear old High Priest, I absolutely agree with you, and I'm with you all the way.' You might even go so far as to

suggest that the only way out of the muddle was to assassinate Merolchazzar and start with a clean slate."

The High Priest stroked his beard thoughtfully.

"I am bound to say I never thought of going quite so far as that."

"Merely a suggestion, of course," said Ascobaruch. "Take it or leave it. I sha'n't be offended. If you know a superior excavation, go to it. But, as a sensible man—and I've always maintained that you are the most sensible man in the country—you must see that it would be a solution. Merolchazzar has been a pretty good king, of course. No one denies that. A fair general, no doubt, and a plus-man at lion-hunting. But, after all—look at it fairly—is life all battles and lion-hunting? Isn't there a deeper side? Wouldn't it be better for the country to have some good orthodox fellow who has worshipped Hec all his life, and could be relied on to maintain the old beliefs—wouldn't the fact that a man like that was on the throne be likely to lead to more general prosperity? There are dozens of men of that kind, simply waiting to be asked. Let us say, purely for purposes of argument, that you approached *me*. I should reply, 'Unworthy though I know myself to be of such an honour, I can tell you this. If you put me on the throne, you can bet your bottom *pazaza* that there's one thing that won't suffer, and that is the worship of Hec!' That's the way I feel about it."

The High Priest pondered.

"O thou of unshuffled features but amiable disposition!" he said, "thy discourse soundeth good to me. Could it be done?"

"Could it!" Ascobaruch uttered a hideous laugh. "Could it! Arouse me in the night-watches and ask me! Question me on the matter, having stopped me for that purpose on the public highway! Why, it's as simple as falling from the upper surface of a felled tree-trunk. What I would suggest—I'm not dictating, mind you: merely trying to help you out—what I would suggest is that you took that long, sharp knife of yours, the one you use for the sacrifices, and toddled out to the Linx—you're sure to find the King there; and just when he's raising that sacrilegious stick of his over his shoulder——"

"O man of infinite wisdom," cried the High Priest, warmly, "verily hast thou spoken a fullness of the mouth!"

"Is it a wager?" said Ascobaruch.

"'Why does your Majesty do that?' 'I tee it up that it may fly the fairer. If I did not, then would it be apt to run along the ground like a beetle instead of soaring like a bird.'"

" It is a wager ! " said the High Priest.

" That's that, then," said Ascobaruch. " Now, I don't want to be mixed up in any unpleasantness, so what I think I'll do while what you might call the preliminaries are being arranged is to go and take a little trip abroad somewhere. The Middle Lakes are pleasant at this time of year. When I come back, it's possible that all the formalities will have been completed, yes ? "

" Rely on me, by Hec ! " said the High Priest, grimly, as he fingered his weapon.

THE High Priest was as good as his word. Early on the morrow he made his way to the Linx, and found the King holing-out on the second green. Merolchazzar was in high good humour.

" Greetings, O venerable one ! " he cried, jovially. " Hadst thou come a moment sooner, thou wouldst have seen me lay my ball dead—aye, dead as mutton, with the sweetest little half-mashie-niblick chip-shot ever seen outside the sacred domain of S'nandrew, on whom "—he bared his head reverently—" be peace ! In one under bogey did I do the hole—yea, and that despite the fact that, slicing my drive, I became ensnared in yonder undergrowth."

The High Priest had not the advantage of understanding one word of what the King was talking about, but he gathered with satisfaction that Merolchazzar was pleased and wholly without suspicion. He clasped an unseen hand more firmly about the handle of his knife, and accompanied the monarch to the next altar. Merolchazzar stooped, and placed a small round white object on a little mound of sand. In spite of his austere views, the High Priest, always a keen student of ritual, became interested.

" Why does your Majesty do that ? "

" I tee it up that it may fly the fairer. If I did not, then would it be apt to run along the ground like a beetle instead of soaring like a bird, and mayhap, for thou seest how rough and tangled is the grass before us, I should have to use a niblick for my second."

The High Priest groped for his meaning.

" It is a ceremony to propitiate the god and bring good luck ? "

" You might call it that."

The High Priest shook his head.

" I may be old-fashioned," he said, " but I should have thought that, to propitiate a god, it would have been better to have sacrificed one of these *kaddiz* on his altar."

" I confess," replied the King, thoughtfully, " that I have often felt that it would be a relief to one's feelings to sacrifice one or two *kaddiz*, but The Pro for some reason or other has set his face against it." He swung at the ball, and sent it forcefully down the fairway. " By Abe, the son of Mitchell," he cried, shading his eyes, " a bird of a drive ! How truly is it written in the book of the prophet Vâdun, ' The left hand applieth the force, the right doth but guide. Grip not, therefore, too closely with the right hand ! ' Yesterday I was pulling all the time."

The High Priest frowned.

" It is written in the sacred book of Hec, your Majesty, ' Thou shalt not follow after strange gods.' "

" Take thou this stick, O venerable one," said the King, paying no attention to the remark, " and have a shot thyself. True, thou art well stricken in years, but many a man has so wrought that he was able to give his grandchildren a stroke a hole. It is never too late to begin."

The High Priest shrank back, horrified. The King frowned.

" It is our Royal wish," he said, coldly.

The High Priest was forced to comply. Had they been alone, it is possible that he might have risked all on one swift stroke with his knife, but by this time a group of *kaddiz* had drifted up, and were watching the proceedings with that supercilious detachment so characteristic of them. He took the stick and arranged his limbs as the King directed.

" Now," said Merolchazzar, " slow back and keep your e'e on the ba' ! "

A MONTH later, Ascobaruch returned from his trip. He had received no word from the High Priest announcing the success of the revolution, but there might be many reasons for that. It was with unruffled contentment that he bade his charioteer drive him to the palace. He was glad to get back, for after all a holiday is hardly a holiday if you have left your business affairs unsettled.

As he drove, the chariot passed a fair open space on the outskirts of the city. A sudden chill froze the serenity of Ascobaruch's mood. He prodded the charioteer sharply in the small of the back.

" What is that ? " he demanded, catching his breath.

All over the green expanse could be seen men in strange robes, moving to and fro in couples and bearing in their hands mystic wands. Some searched restlessly in the bushes, others were walking briskly in the direction of small red flags. A sickening foreboding of disaster fell upon Ascobaruch.

The charioteer seemed surprised at the question.

" Yon's the muneecipal linx," he replied.

" The what ? "

" The muneecipal linx."

" Tell me, fellow, why do you talk that way ? "

" Whit way ? "

"Why, like that. The way you're talking."

Hoots, mon!" said the charioteer. "His Majesty King Merolchazzar—may his handicap decrease!—hae passit a law that a' his soobjects shall do it. Aiblins, 'tis the language spooken by The Pro, on whom be peace! Mphm!"

Ascobaruch sat back limply, his head swimming. The chariot drove on, till now it took the road adjoining the royal Linx. A wall lined a portion of this road, and suddenly, from behind this wall, there rent the air a great shout of laughter.

"Pull up!" cried Ascobaruch to the charioteer.

He had recognized that laugh. It was the laugh of Merolchazzar.

Ascobaruch crept to the wall and cautiously poked his head over it. The sight he saw drove the blood from his face and left him white and haggard.

The King and the Grand Vizier were playing a foursome against The Pro and the High Priest of Hec, and the Vizier had just laid the High Priest a dead stymie.

Ascobaruch tottered to the chariot.

"Take me back," he muttered, pallidly. "I've forgotten something!"

"Hand in hand, they walked slowly into the palace."

AND so golf came to Oom, and with it prosperity unequalled in the whole history of the land. Everybody was happy. There was no more unemployment. Crime ceased. The chronicler repeatedly refers to it in his memoirs as the Golden Age. And yet there remained one man on whom complete felicity had not descended. It was all right while he was actually on the Linx, but there were blank, dreary stretches of the night when King Merolchazzar lay sleepless on his couch and mourned that he had nobody to love him.

Of course, his subjects loved him in a way. A new statue had been erected in the palace square, showing him in the act of getting out of casual water. The minstrels had composed a whole cycle of up-to-date songs, commemorating his prowess with the mashie. His handicap was down to twelve. But these things are not all. A golfer needs a loving wife, to whom he can describe the day's play through the long evenings. And this was just where Merolchazzar's life was empty. No word had come from the Princess of the Outer Isles, and, as he refused to be put off with just-as-good substitutes, he remained a lonely man.

But one morning, in the early hours of a summer day, as he lay sleeping after a disturbed night, Merolchazzar was awakened by the eager hand of the Lord High Chamberlain, shaking his shoulder.

"Now what?" said the King.

"Hoots, your Majesty! Glorious news! The Princess of the Outer Isles waits without—I mean wi'oot!"

The King sprang from his couch.

"A messenger from the Princess at last!"

"Nay, sire, the Princess herself—that is to say," said the Lord Chamberlain, who was an old man and had found it hard to accustom himself to the new tongue at his age, "her ain sel'! And believe me, or rather, mind ah'm tellin' ye," went on the honest man, joyfully, for he had been deeply exercised by his monarch's troubles, "her Highness is the easiest thing to look at these eyes hae ever seen. And you can say I said it!"

"She is beautiful?"

"Your Majesty, she is, in the best and deepest sense of the word, a pippin!"

King Merolchazzar was groping wildly for his robes.

"Tell her to wait!" he cried. "Go and

amuse her. Ask her riddles! Tell her anecdotes! Don't let her go. Say I'll be down in a moment. Where in the name of Zoroaster is our imperial mesh-knit underwear?"

A fair and pleasing sight was the Princess of the Outer Isles as she stood on the terrace in the clear sunshine of the summer morning, looking over the King's gardens. With her delicate little nose she sniffed the fragrance of the flowers. Her blue eyes roamed over the rose bushes, and the breeze ruffled the golden curls about her temples. Presently a sound behind her caused her to turn, and she perceived a godlike man hurrying across the terrace pulling up a sock. And at the sight of him the Princess's heart sang within her like the birds down in the garden.

"Hope I haven't kept you waiting," said Merolchazzar, apologetically. He, too, was conscious of a strange, wild exhilaration. Truly was this maiden, as his Chamberlain had said, noticeably easy on the eyes. Her beauty was as water in the desert, as fire on a frosty night, as diamonds, rubies, pearls, sapphires, and amethysts.

"Oh, no!" said the princess, "I've been enjoying myself. How passing beautiful are thy gardens, O King!"

"My gardens may be passing beautiful," said Merolchazzar, earnestly, "but they aren't half so passing beautiful as thy eyes. I have dreamed of thee by night and by day, and I will tell the world I was nowhere near it! My sluggish fancy came not within a hundred and fifty-seven miles of the reality. Now let the sun dim his face and the moon hide herself abashed. Now let the flowers bend their heads and the gazelle of the mountains confess itself a cripple. Princess, your slave!"

And King Merolchazzar, with that easy grace so characteristic of Royalty, took her hand in his and kissed it.

As he did so, he gave a start of surprise.

"By Hec!" he exclaimed. "What hast thou been doing to thyself? Thy hand is all over little rough places inside. Has some malignant wizard laid a spell upon thee, or what is it?"

The Princess blushed.

"If I make that clear to thee," she said, "I shall also make clear why it was that I sent thee no message all this long while. My time was so occupied, verily I did not seem to have a moment. The fact is, these sorenesses are due to a strange, new religion to which I and my subjects have but recently become converted. And O that I might make thee also of the true faith! 'Tis a wondrous tale, my lord. Some two moons back there was brought to my Court by wandering pirates a captive of an uncouth race who dwell in the north. And this man has taught us——"

King Merolchazzar uttered a loud cry.

"By Tom, the son of Morris! can this truly be so? What is thy handicap?"

The Princess stared at him, wide-eyed.

"Truly this is a miracle! Art thou also a worshipper of the great Gowf?"

"Am I!" cried the King. "Am I!" He broke off. "Listen!"

FROM the minstrels' room high up in the palace there came the sound of singing. The minstrels were practising a new pæan of praise—words by the Grand Vizier, music by the High Priest of Hec—which they were to render at the next full moon at the banquet of the worshippers of Gowf. The words came clear and distinct through the still air:—

"Oh, praises let us utter
To our most glorious King!
It fairly makes you stutter
To see him start his swing:
Success attend his putter!
And luck be with his drive!
And may he do each hole in two,
Although the bogey's five!"

The voices died away. There was a silence.

"If I hadn't missed a two-foot putt, I'd have done the long fifteenth in four yesterday," said the King.

"I won the Ladies' Open Championship of the Outer Isles last week," said the Princess.

They looked into each other's eyes for a long moment. And then, hand in hand, they walked slowly into the palace.

EPILOGUE.

"WELL?" we said, anxiously.

"I like it," said the editor.

"Good egg!" we murmured.

The editor pressed a bell, a single ruby set in a fold of the tapestry upon the wall. The major-domo appeared.

"Give this man a purse of gold," said the editor, "and throw him out."

The Uncharted Coast

by

A. CONAN DOYLE

No. VI, A WORKER OF WONDERS.

ON the early morning of April 9th, 1855, the steam packet *Africa*, from Boston, was drawing into Liverpool Docks. Captain Harrison, his responsibility lifted from him, was standing on the bridge, the pilot beside him, while below the passengers had assembled, some bustling about with their smaller articles of luggage, while others lined the decks and peered curiously at the shores of Old England. Most of them showed natural exultation at the successful end of their voyage, but among them was one who seemed to have no pleasant prospects in view. Indeed, his appearance showed that his most probable destiny would make him independent of any earthly career. This was a youth some two-and-twenty years of age, tall, slim, with a marked elegance of bearing and a fastidious neatness of dress, but with a worn, hectic look upon his very expressive face, which told of the ravages of some wasting disease. Blue-eyed, and with hair of a light auburn tint, he was of the type which is peculiarly open to the attack of tubercle, and the extreme emaciation of his frame showed how little power remained with him by which he might resist it. An acute physician watching him closely would probably have given him six months of life in our humid island. Yet this young man was destined to be the instrument of God in making a greater change in English thought than any traveller for centuries—a change only now developing and destined, as I think, to revolutionize for ever our views on the most vital of all subjects. For this was Daniel Dunglas Home, a youth of Scottish birth and extraction, sprung from the noble Border family of that name, and the possessor of strange personal powers which make him, with the possible exception of Swedenborg, the most remarkable individual of whom we have any record since the age of the Apostles, whose gifts he appeared to inherit. A deep melancholy lay upon his sensitive features as he viewed the land which contained no one whom he could call friend. Tears welled from his eyes, for he was a man of swift emotions and feminine susceptibilities. Then, with a sudden resolution, he disengaged himself from the crowd, rushed down to the cabin, and fell upon his knees in prayer. He has recorded how a spring of hope and comfort bubbled up in his heart, so that no more joyous man set his foot that day upon the Mersey quay, or one more ready to meet the fate which lay before him.

But how strange a fate, and what a singular equipment with which to face this new world of strangers! He had hardly a relation in the world. His left lung was partly gone. His income was modest, though sufficient. He had no trade or profession, his education having been interrupted by his illness. In character he was shy, gentle, sentimental, artistic, affectionate, and deeply religious. He had a strong tendency both to art and the drama, so that his powers of sculpture were considerable, and as a reciter he proved in later life that he had few living equals. But on the top of all this, and of an unflinching honesty which was so uncompromising that he often offended his own allies, there was one gift so remarkable that it threw everything else into insignificance. This lay in certain powers, quite independent of his own volition, coming and going with disconcerting suddenness, but proving to all

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who would examine the proof that there was something in this man's atmosphere which enabled forces outside himself and outside our ordinary apprehension to manifest themselves upon this plane of matter. In other words, he was a medium—the greatest that the modern world has ever seen.

A lesser man might have used his extraordinary powers to found some special sect of which he would have been the undisputed high priest, or to surround himself with a glamour of power and mystery. Certainly most people in his position would have been tempted to use them for the making of money. As to this latter point, let it be said at once that never in the course of the thirty years of his strange ministry did he touch one shilling as payment for his gifts. It is on sure record that as much as two thousand pounds was offered to him by the Union Circle in Paris in the year 1857 for a single séance, and that he, a poor man and an invalid, utterly refused. "I have been sent on a mission," he said; "that mission is to demonstrate immortality. I have never taken money for it and I never will." There were certain presents from Royalty which cannot be refused without boorishness—rings, scarf pins, and the like, tokens of friendship rather than recompense, for before his premature death there were few monarchs in Europe with whom this shy youth from the Liverpool landing stage was not upon terms of affectionate intimacy. Napoleon the Third provided for his only sister; the Emperor of Russia sponsored his marriage. What novelist would dare to invent such a career?

But there are more subtle temptations than those of wealth. Home's uncompromising honesty was the best safeguard against those. Never for a moment did he lose his humility and his sense of proportion. "I have these powers," he would say; "I shall be happy up to the limit of my strength to demonstrate them to you if you approach me as one gentleman should approach another. I shall be glad if you can throw any further light upon them. I will lend myself to any reasonable experiment. I have no control over them—they use me but I do not use them. They desert me for months and then come back in redoubled force. I am a passive instrument—no more." Such was his unvarying attitude. He was always the easy, amiable man of the world, with nothing either of the mantle of the prophet or of the skull-cap of the magician. Like most truly great men, there was no touch of pose in his nature. An index of his fine feeling is that when confirmation was needed for his results he would never quote any names unless he was perfectly certain that the owners would not suffer in any way through being associated with an unpopular cult. Sometimes, even after they had freely given leave, he still withheld the names, lest he should unwittingly injure a friend. When he published his first series of "Incidents in My Life" the *Saturday Review* waxed very sarcastic over the anonymous evidence of Countess O——, Count B——, Count de K——, Princess de B——, and Mrs. S——, who were quoted as having witnessed manifestations. In his second volume Home, having assured himself of the concurrence of his friends, filled the blanks with the names of the Countess Orsini, Count de Beaumont, Count de Komar, Princess de Beaurean, and the well-known American hostess, Mrs. Henry Senior. His Royal friends he never quoted at all, and yet it is notorious that the Emperor Napoleon, the Empress Eugénie, the Czar, the Emperor William I. of Germany, and the Kings of Bavaria and Würtemberg were all equally convinced by his extraordinary powers. Never once was Home convicted of any deception either in word or in deed.

IN these days, when the facts of psychic phenomena are familiar to all save those who are wilfully ignorant, we can hardly realize the moral courage which was needed by Home in putting forward his powers and upholding them in public. To the average educated Briton in the material Victorian era, a man who claimed to be able to produce results which upset Newton's law of gravity, and which showed invisible mind acting upon visible matter, was *prima facie* a scoundrel and an impostor. The view of Spiritualism pronounced by Vice-Chancellor Gifford at the conclusion of the Home-Lyon trial was that of the class to which he belonged. He knew nothing of the matter, but took it for granted that anything with such claims must be false. No doubt similar things were reported in far-off lands and ancient books, but that they could occur in prosaic, steady old England, the England of bank rates and free imports, was too absurd for serious thought. It has been recorded that at this trial Lord Gifford turned to Home's counsel and said, "Do I understand you to state that your client claims that he has been levitated into the air?" The counsel assented—on which the judge turned to the jury and made such a movement as the high priest may have made in ancient days when he rent his garments as a protest against blasphemy. In 1867 there were few of the jury who were sufficiently educated to check the judge's remarks, and it is just in that particular that we have made some progress in the fifty years between. Slow work—but Christianity took more than three hundred years to come into its own.

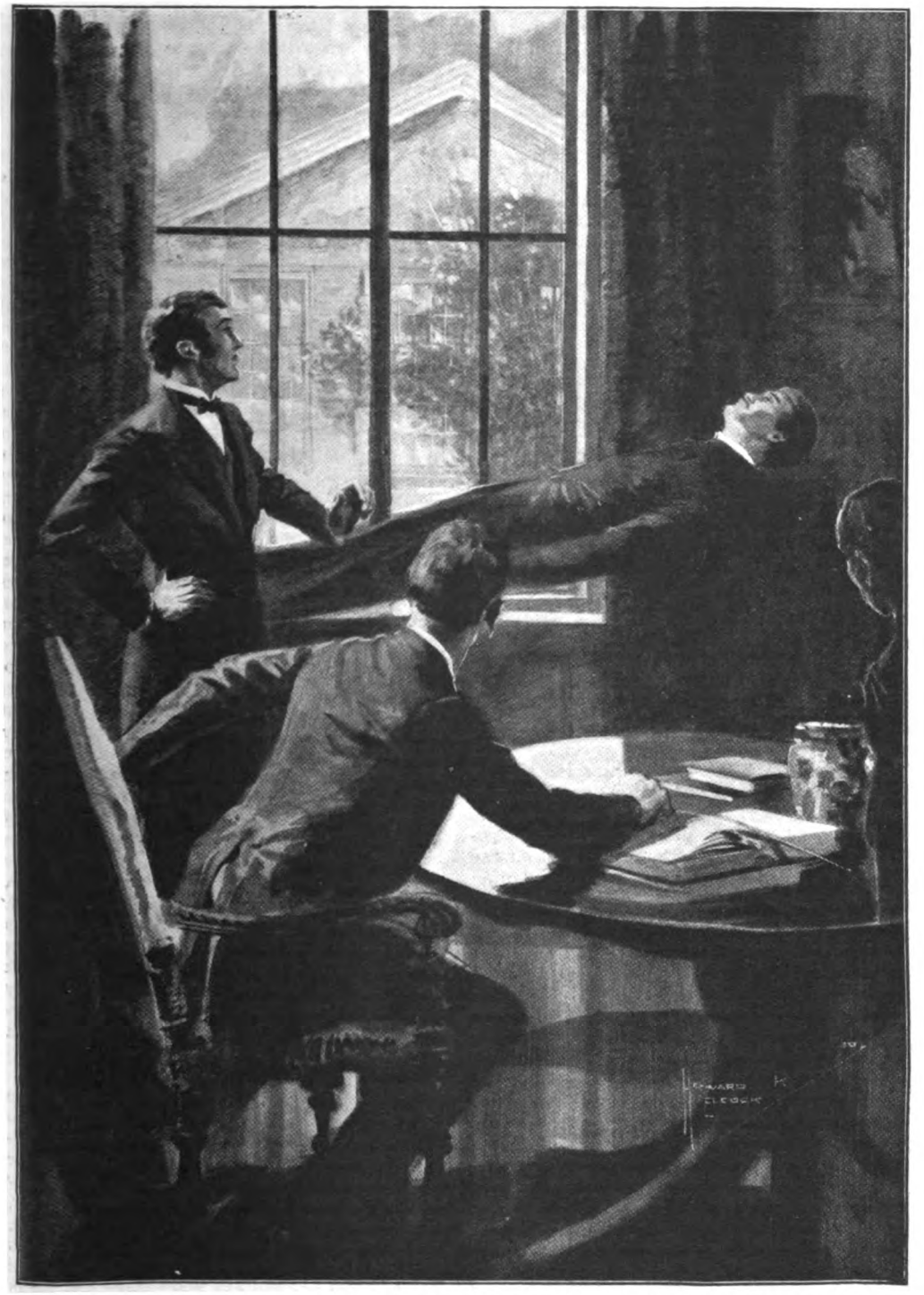
Take this question of levitation as a test of Home's powers. It is claimed that more than a hundred times in good light, before reputable witnesses, he floated in the air. Consider the evidence. In 1857, in a château near Bordeaux, he was lifted to the ceiling of a lofty room in the presence of Mme. Ducos, widow of the Minister of Marine, and of the Count and Countess de Beaumont. In 1860 Robert Bell wrote an article, "Stranger than Fiction," in the *Cornhill*. "He rose from his chair," says Bell, "four or five feet from the ground. . . . We saw his figure pass from one side of the window to the other, feet foremost, lying horizontally in the air." Dr. Gully of Malvern, a well-known medical man, and Robert Chambers, the author and publisher, were the other witnesses. Is it to be supposed that these men were lying confederates, or that they could not tell if a man were floating in the air or pretending to do so? In the same year Home was raised at Mrs. Milner Gibson's house in the presence of Lord and Lady Clarence Paget—the former passing his hands underneath him to assure himself of the fact. A few months later, Mr. Wason, a Liverpool solicitor, with seven others saw the same phenomenon. "Mr. Home," he says, "crossed the table over the heads of the persons sitting around it." He added: "I reached his hand seven feet from the floor, and moved along five or six paces as he floated above me in the air." In 1861 Mrs. Parkes, of Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park, tells how she was present with Bulwer Lytton and Mr. Hall when Home, in her own drawing-room, was raised till his hand was on the top of the door, and then floated horizontally forward. In 1866 Mr. and Mrs. Hall, Lady Dunsany, and Mrs. Senior, in Mr. Hall's house, saw Home, his face transfigured and shining, twice rise to the ceiling, leaving a cross marked in pencil upon the second occasion, so as to assure the witnesses that they were not victims of imagination. In 1868 Lord Adare, Lord Lindsay, Captain Wynne, and Mr. Smith Barry saw Home levitate upon many occasions. A very minute account has been left by the first three witnesses of the occurrence of December 16th of this year, when, at Ashley House, Home, in a state of trance, floated out of the

"A deep melancholy lay upon his sensitive features as he viewed the land which contained no one whom he could call a friend."

bedroom and into the sitting-room window, passing seventy feet above the street. After his arrival in the sitting-room he went back into the bedroom with Lord Adare, and upon the latter remarking that he could not understand how Home could have flitted through the window, which was only partially raised, "he told me to stand a little distance off. He then went through the open space head first quite rapidly, his body being nearly horizontal, and apparently rigid. He came in again feet foremost." Such was the account given by Lords Adare and Lindsay. Upon its publication, Dr. Carpenter, who earned an unenviable reputation by a perverse opposition to every fact which bore upon this question, wrote exultantly to point out that there had been a third witness who had not been heard from, assuming, without the least justification, that Captain Wynne's evidence would be contradictory. He went the length of saying, "A single honest sceptic declares that Mr. Home was sitting in his chair all the time," a statement which can only be described as false. Captain Wynne at once wrote corroborating the others, and adding, "If you are not to believe the corroborative evidence of *three* unimpeached witnesses, there would be an end to all justice and courts of law." So many are the other instances of Home's levitations that a long article might easily be written upon this single phase of his mediumship. Professor Crookes was again and again a witness to the phenomenon, and refers to fifty instances which had come within his knowledge. But is there any fair-minded person, who has read the little that I have recorded above, who will not say with Professor Challis, "Either the facts must be admitted or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up"?

BUT now a word of explanation. "Are we then back in the age of miracles?" cries the reader. There is no miracle—nothing on this plane is supernatural. What we see now and what we have read of in ages past are but the operation of law which has not yet been studied and defined. Already we realize something of its possibilities and of its limitations, which are as exact in their way as those of any purely physical power. We must hold the balance between those who would believe nothing and those who would believe too much. Gradually the mists will clear and we will chart the shadowy coast. When the needle first sprang up at the magnet it was not an infraction of the laws of gravity. It was that there had been the local intervention of another, stronger force. Such is the case, also, when psychic powers act upon the plane of matter. Had Home's faith in this power faltered, or had his circle been unduly disturbed, he would have fallen. When Peter lost faith he sank into the waves. Across the centuries the same cause still produced the same effect. Spiritual power is ever with us if we do not avert our faces, and nothing has been vouchsafed to Judea which is withheld from England.

It is in this respect, as a confirmation of the power of the unseen, and as a final answer to materialism as we now understand it, that Home's public career is of such supreme importance. He was an affirmative witness of the truth of those so-called "miracles," which have been the stumbling-block for so many earnest minds, and are now destined to be the strong, solid proof of the accuracy of the original narrative. Millions of doubting souls in the agony of spiritual conflict had cried out for definite proof that all was not empty space around us, that there were powers beyond our grasp, that the ego was not a mere secretion of nervous tissue, and that the dead did really carry on this personal, unbroken existence. All this was proved by this greatest of modern missionaries to anyone who could observe and reason. It is easy to poke superficial fun at rising tables and quivering walls, but they were the nearest and most natural objects which could record in material terms that power which was beyond our human ken. A mind which would be unmoved by an inspired sentence was struck into humility and into new paths of research in the presence of even the most homely of these inexplicable phenomena. It is easy to call them puerile, but they effected the purpose for which they were sent by shaking to its foundations the complaisance of those material men of science who were brought into actual contact with them. They are to be regarded not as ends in themselves, but as the elementary means by which the mind should be diverted into new channels of thought. And those channels of thought led straight to the recognition of the survival of the spirit. "You have conveyed incalculable joy and comfort to the hearts of many people," said Bishop Clark of Rhode Island. "You have made dwelling-places light that were dark before." "Mademoiselle," said Home to the lady who was to be his wife, "I have a mission entrusted to me; it is a great and a holy one." The famous Dr. Elliotson, immortalized by Thackeray under the name of Dr. Goodenough, was one of the leaders of British materialism. He met Home, saw his powers, and was able soon to say that he had lived all his life in darkness and had thought there was nothing in existence but the material; but he now had a firm hope which he trusted he would hold while on earth. Innumerable instances could be quoted of the spiritual value of his work,



"We saw his figure pass from one side of the window to the other, feet foremost, lying horizontally in the air."

but it has never been better summed up than in a paragraph from Mrs. Webster of Florence, who saw much of his ministry. "He is the most marvellous missionary of modern times, in the greatest of all causes, and the good that he has done cannot be reckoned. Where Mr. Home passes he bestows around him the greatest of all blessings—the certainty of a future life." Now that the details of his career can be read it is to the whole wide world that he brings this most vital of all messages.

It is curious to see how his message affected those of his own generation. Reading the account of his life written by his widow—a most convincing document, since she, of all living mortals, must have known the real man—it would appear that his most utterly whole-hearted support and appreciation came from those aristocrats of France and Russia with whom he was brought into contact. The warm glow of personal admiration and even reverence in their letters is such as can hardly be matched in any biography. In England he had a close circle of ardent supporters, a few of the upper classes, with the Halls, the Howitts, Robert Chambers, Mrs. Milner Gibson, Professor Crookes, and others. But there was a sad lack of courage among those who admitted the facts in private and stood aloof in public. Lord Brougham and Bulwer Lytton were of the type of Nicodemus, the novelist being the worst offender. The "Intelligentia" on the whole came badly out of the matter, and many an honoured name suffers in the story. Faraday and Tyndall were fantastically unscientific in their methods of prejudging a question first, and offering to examine it afterwards on the condition that their pre-judgment was accepted. Sir David Brewster said some honest things, and then, in a panic, denied that he had said them, forgetting that the evidence was on actual record. Browning wrote a long poem—if such doggerel can be called poetry—to describe an exposure which had never taken place. Carpenter earned an unenviable notoriety as an unscrupulous opponent, while proclaiming some strange spiritualistic thesis of his own. The secretaries of the Royal Society refused to take a cab drive in order to see Crookes's demonstration of the physical phenomena, while they pronounced roundly against them. Lord Gifford inveighed from the Bench against a subject the first elements of which he did not understand. As to the clergy, such an order might not have existed during the thirty years that this, the most marvellous spiritual outpouring of many centuries, was before the public. I cannot recall the name of one British clergyman who showed any intelligent interest, and when in 1872 a full account of the St. Petersburg séances began to appear in the *Times*, it was cut short, according to Mr. H. T. Humphreys, "on account of strong remonstrances to Mr. Delane, the editor, by certain of the higher clergy of the Church of England." Such was the contribution of our official spiritual guides. Dr. Elliotson, the Rationalist, was far more alive than they. The rather bitter comment of Mrs. Home is, "The verdict of his own generation was that of the blind and deaf upon the man who could hear and see."

Home's charity was among his more beautiful characteristics. Like all true charity, it was secret, and only comes out indirectly and by chance. One of his numerous traducers declared that he had allowed a bill for fifty pounds to be sent in to his friend, Mr. Rhymer. In self-defence it came out that it was not a bill, but a cheque most generously sent by Home to help this friend in a crisis. Considering his constant poverty, fifty pounds probably represented a good part of his bank balance. His widow dwells with pardonable pride upon the many evidences found in his letters after his death. "Now it is an unknown artist for whose brush Home's generous efforts had found employment; now a distressed worker writes of his sick wife's life saved by comforts that Home provided; now a mother thanks him for a start in life for her son. How much time and thought he devoted to helping others when the circumstances of his own life would have led most men to think only of their own needs and cares." "Send me a word from the heart that has known so often how to cheer a friend!" cries one of his *protégés*. "Shall I ever prove worthy of all the good you have done me?" says another letter. We find him roaming the battlefields round Paris, often under fire, with his pockets full of cigars for the wounded. A German officer writes affectionately to remind him how he saved him from bleeding to death, and carried him on his own weak back out of the place of danger. Truly Mrs. Browning was a better judge of character than her spouse, and Sir Galahad a better name than Sludge.

THERE are few of the varied gifts which we call "mediumistic," and St. Paul "of the spirit," which Home did not possess—indeed, the characteristic of his psychic power was its unusual versatility. We speak usually of a direct voice medium, of a trance speaker, of a clairvoyant, or of a physical medium, but Home was all four. To take St. Paul's gifts in their order he had "the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge" when in his trance utterances he described the life beyond. "The gift of healing" was with him, and the account of his curing young De

Cardonne of total deafness or of Mme. de Lakine of paralysis is historical. "The operation of great works" was shown in his phenomena when the very building would shake from an unknown power. "Discerning of spirits" was continually with him. There is no note, however, of prophecy or of the gift of tongues. So far as can be traced he had little experience of the powers of other mediums, and was not immune from that psychic jealousy which is a common trait of these sensitives. Mrs. Jencken, formerly Miss Kate Fox, was the only other medium with whom he was upon terms of friendship. He bitterly resented any form of deception, and carried this excellent trait rather too far by looking with eyes of suspicion upon all forms of manifestation which did not exactly correspond with his own. This opinion, expressed in an uncompromising manner in his last book, "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism," gave natural offence to other mediums who claimed to be as honest as himself. A wider acquaintance with phenomena would have made him more charitable. Thus he protested strongly against any séance being held in the dark, but this is certainly a counsel of perfection, for experiments upon the ectoplasm, which is the physical basis of all materializations, show that it is fatally affected by light unless it is tinted red. Home had no large experience of complete materializations, such as those obtained in those days by Miss Florrie Cook or Mme. d'Espérance, or in our own time by Mme. Bisson's medium, and therefore he could dispense with complete darkness in his own ministry. Thus his opinion was unjust to others. Again, Home declared roundly that matter could not pass through matter, because his own phenomena did not take that form, and yet the evidence that matter can in certain cases be passed through matter seems to be overwhelming. Even birds of rare varieties have been brought into séance rooms under circumstances which seem to preclude fraud, and the experiments of passing wood through wood as shown before Zollner and the other Leipzig professors were quite final, as set forth in the famous physicist's account, in "Transcendental Physics," of his experiences with Slade. Thus it may count as a small flaw in Home's character that he decried and doubted the powers which he did not himself happen to possess.

Daniel Dunglas Home.
From a Painting.

Some also might count it as a failing that he carried his message rather to the leaders of society and of life than to the vast toiling masses. It is probable that Home had, in fact, the weakness as well as the graces of the artistic nature, and that he was most at ease and happiest in an atmosphere of elegance and refinement, with a personal repulsion from all that was sordid and ill-favoured. If there were no other reason, the precarious state of his health unfitted him for any sterner mission, and he was driven by repeated hæmorrhages to seek the pleasant and refined life of Italy, Switzerland, and the Riviera. But for the prosecution of his mission, as apart from personal self-sacrifice, there can be no doubt that his message carried to the laboratory of a Crookes or to the Court of a Napoleon was more useful than if it were laid before the crowd. The assent of science and of character was needed before the public could gain assurance that such things were true. If it was not fully gained the fault lies assuredly with the hide-bound men of science and thinkers of the day, and by no means with Home, who played his part of actual demonstration to perfection, leaving it to other and less gifted men to analyse and to make public that which he had shown them. He did not profess to be a man of science, but he was the raw material of science, willing and anxious that others should learn from him all that he could convey to the world, so that science should itself testify to religion, while religion should be buttressed upon science. When Home's message has been fully learned, an unbelieving man will not stand convicted of impiety, but of ignorance.

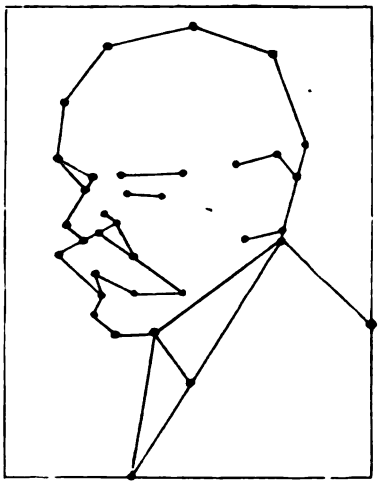
There was something pathetic in Home's efforts to find some creed in which he could satisfy his own gregarious instinct—for he had no claims to be a strong-minded individualist—and at the same time find a niche into which he could fit his own precious packet of assured truth. His pilgrimage

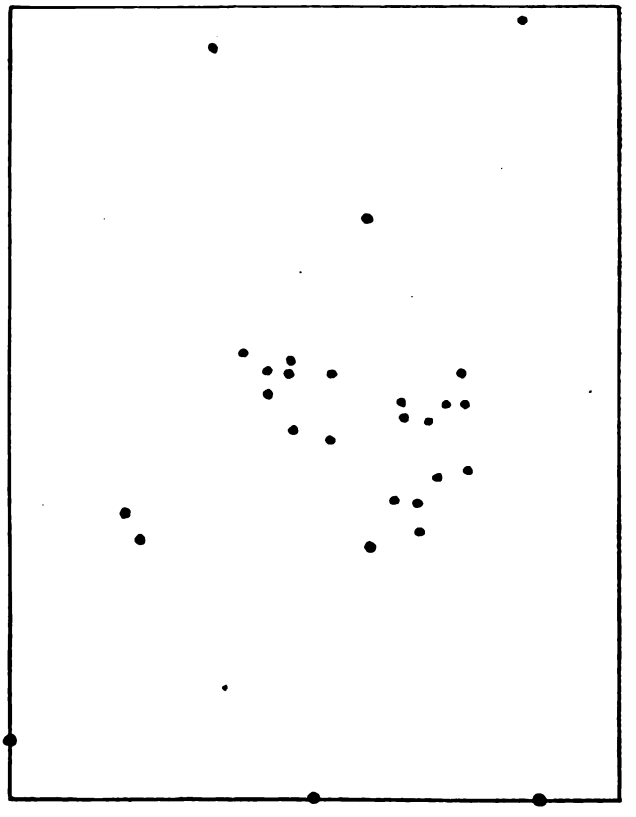
vindicates the assertion of some Spiritualists that a man may belong to any creed and carry with him the spiritual knowledge, but it also bears out those who reply that perfect harmony with that spiritual knowledge can only be found, as matters now stand, in a special Spiritualist community. Alas that it should be so! For it is too big a thing to sink into a sect, however great that sect might become. Home began in his youth as a Wesleyan, but soon left them for the more liberal atmosphere of Congregationalism. In Italy the artistic atmosphere of the Roman Catholic Church, and possibly its record of so many phenomena akin to his own, caused him to become a convert with an intention of joining a monastic order—an intention which his common sense caused him to abandon. The change of religion was at a period when his psychic powers had deserted him for a year, and his confessor assured him that as they were of evil origin they would certainly never be heard of again now that he was a son of the true Church. None the less, on the very day that the year expired they came back in renewed strength. From that time Home seems to have been only nominally a Catholic, if at all, and after his second marriage—both his marriages were to Russian ladies—he was strongly drawn towards the Greek Church, and it was under their ritual that he was at last laid to rest at St. Germain in 1886. "To another discerning of spirits" (Cor. xii. 10) is the short inscription upon that grave, of which the world has not yet heard the last.

IF proof were needed of the blamelessness of Home's life, it could not be better shown than by the fact that his numerous enemies, spying ever for some opening to attack, could get nothing in his whole career upon which to comment save the wholly innocent affair which is known as the Home-Lyon case. Any impartial judge, reading the depositions in this case—they are to be found verbatim in the second series of "Incidents from My Life"—would agree that it is not blame but commiseration which was owing to Home. One could desire no higher proof of the nobility of his character than his dealings with this unpleasant freakish woman, who first insisted upon settling a large sum of money upon him, and then, her whim having changed, and her expectations of an immediate introduction into high society being disappointed, stuck at nothing in order to get it back again.

Had she merely asked for it back, there is little doubt that Home's delicate feelings would have led him to return it, even though he had been put to much trouble and expense over the matter, which had entailed a change of his name to Home-Lyon, to meet the woman's desire that he should be her adopted son. Her request, however, was so framed that he could not honourably agree to it, as it would have implied an admission that he had done wrong in accepting the gift. If one consults the original letters—which few of those who comment upon the case seem to have done—you find that Home, S. C. Hall as his representative, and Mr. Wilkinson as his solicitor implored the woman to moderate the unreasonable benevolence which was to change so rapidly into even more unreasonable malevolence. She was absolutely determined that Home should have the money and be her heir. A less mercenary man never lived, and he begged her again and again to think of her relatives, to which she answered that the money was her own to do what she pleased with, and that no relatives were dependent upon it. From the time that he accepted the new situation he acted and wrote as a dutiful son, and it is not uncharitable to suppose that this entirely filial attitude may not have been that which this elderly lady had planned out in her scheming brain. At any rate, she soon tired of her fad and reclaimed her money upon the excuse—a monstrous one to anyone who will read the letters and consider the dates—that spirit messages received through Home had caused her to take the action she had done. The case was tried in the Court of Chancery, and the judge alluded to Mrs. Lyon's "innumerable misstatements on many important particulars—misstatements upon oath so perversely untrue that they have embarrassed the Court to a great degree and quite discredited the plaintiff's testimony." In spite of this caustic comment, and in spite also of elementary justice, the verdict was against Home on the general ground that British law put the burden of disproof upon the defendant in such a case, and complete disproof is impossible when assertion is met by counter-assertion. Even Home's worst enemies were forced to admit that the fact that he had retained the money in England and had not lodged it where it would have been beyond recovery proved his honest intentions in this the most unfortunate episode of his life.

Such, within the compass of a short sketch, was the strange fate of the young man whom we saw land upon the Liverpool pier. He was at that time twenty-two. He died in his fifty-third year. In those thirty years he threw out seed with either hand. Much fell among stones; much was lost on the wayside; but much found a true resting-place, and has put forth a harvest the end of which no living man can see.





A Point-to-Point Portrait.

WITH PRIZES FOR A SOLUTION.

THE left-hand frame above contains a picture of a man's head made by drawing straight lines joining a series of dots. In this example there are thirty-five dots and thirty-one lines.

The right-hand frame contains another series of dots. If you join them in the correct order, you will produce a portrait of a dignitary of the Church.

There are twenty-eight dots, and there will be twenty-two lines.

For correct solutions the following prizes are offered: First Prize £10, Second Prize £5, Third Prize £3.

If no correct solution is received, those which come nearest to the portrait will obtain the prizes.

Make your attempts in light pencil, easy to rub out. When you have found the solution, ink it in, cut out the portrait, and address it to "Portrait Competition," "THE STRAND MAGAZINE," 8-11, Southampton St., Strand, London, W.C.2. Closing date 25th May, 1921.

No skill in drawing is required. Any child who can hold a pencil can do it

The Editor's decision in all questions relating to this competition is final.

A Silly thing to do

by ROLAND PERTWEE

ILLUSTRATED BY BALLIOL SALMON

IT wasn't very often the Guv'nor tackled me directly on any subject, though I could often feel in my bones there were things he wanted to say. The fact was that he nearly got let down himself through betting, and only escaped being sacked from Waterhouse on account of his perfectly stunning school record and the pretty spectacular nature of the bet he undertook. Every Waterhouse boy knew Ralph Casement by reputation, and how, in his last year, he shinned up the chapel steeple and planted the Head's opera-hat on the weathercock. With a decent pair of glasses you can still see the old wires twisted round the arrow, with twenty years' rust upon them.

He was frightfully keen I should leave a decent impression at the school, and of all chaps in the world he was the one I most wanted to please. His trust in me was one of the things I was proudest of, and I did my best to keep it at full pressure.

"Pitch it high, Dennis," he said. "Your half-hearted fellows are no good to anyone. I'd rather hear you had tried to burn down the Western Hall" (that was where the School mustered on Speech Days) "than get a report you were a breaker of minor rules—a member of silly smoking societies and gambling cliques."

I never meant to let him down, and all said it was a stupid affair. One of the chaps had a pack of cards and four of us started to play nap. Then a fellow named Preston planked down some coppers and suggested a halfpenny pool. I started to kick at that.

"No one expected you to play," he said, and got a laugh against me.

"All right," said I, and turned out my pockets; "but after we've finished I'm going to plug you in the eye."

"Better do it first," he sneered, not believing I meant what I'd said.

So I rushed him, and because I was a bit wild and he a bit rattled, I planted a good 'un where he kept his wind. He let go a mighty squawk as his breath ran out—a squawk which carried over the hedge and was heard by Brander, our house-master. Next moment he had pushed through a gap and was with us. Preston was gasping on the ground alongside the spread rug with the cards and the cash upon it. The two other chaps had legged it before Brander arrived.

It was a pretty rotten case for both of us, and we knew it.

"Well, you fellows," he said, "it's out of my hands, you know." His mouth looked a bit queer and his lips twitched uncertainly. "I thought you were above this sort of thing, Casement." And he turned away.

It was Preston who called him back.

"My stupid fault, sir," he stammered, and told the tale as it had happened.

I never thought Preston had that much decency in him, so I couldn't do less than sing out:—

"But I was going to play for money, sir."

Brander dug his stick into the ground without saying anything, then :—

"The rules are clear enough. If you were in the Sixth you'd be sacked for this. As lower Fifth boys you've earned the rod—publicly. If this is reported to the Head you know what to expect. If I don't report it I shall be shirking a duty myself. I think I'll leave the choice in your hands. You can tell me what you decide after evening call-over."

IT was to Brander's credit, not ours, that we told him we would take our gruel from the Head. Brander was a ripping chap—a nailer for duty—and it seemed a low-down thing to squeeze out by taking advantage of his offer.

"Good," he said, "that's British! The thing's finished, and you needn't be afraid I shall read you a sermon. Certain things aren't worth while, that's all I've got to say."

We went out of the study loving Brander—there's no other word for it.

I told the Guv'nor all about it when I was back for the Easter Vac.

"I'm glad, very glad, you told me," he said. "Gambling—oh, well, you know yourself how much good it is. I nearly got fired for it myself—and somehow, Dennis, I don't want you to get fired."

"Dad," said I, "if you like I'll swear never to touch another card while I'm at Waterhouse."

"No," he replied, "only if *you* like. I don't want to exact any oaths."

"I *do* like."

"Oh, fine," said he. "We'll shake hands on that." And we did.

I can tell you it meant something when the Guv'nor and I shook hands on a promise. He knew he could count on my word, just as I could count on his. Our partnership was sound and pretty tremendous. You see, my mother died when I was born, so we only had each other to look to. His was a pretty lonely sort of life, and he was only thirty-six—quite a youngster really. I often used to wonder why he didn't marry again. I suppose it hadn't occurred to him.

The afternoon following our talk he took me over to Conrad's house and talked rather queerly as we strolled across the fields.

"I want you to meet Conrad's daughter, Dennis. I think you'll like her. 'T any rate, I'd like you to try." He didn't wait for my answer, but went on: "I suppose, old son, I seem an elderly sort of chap to you?"

"No fear," I answered.

"But I've got set in elderly moulds, and you're used to that. Think you could get used to me in any other way?"

"I'm jolly certain I don't want you any different," I said.

And he laughed rather an awkward sort of laugh.

We met Conrad and his daughter at the foot of their garden. She was absolutely stunning. For all the world like Mary Pickford, but with more fun at the corners of her mouth. The Guv'nor packed us off together to make friends—and I never had a jollier task than that.

"You're Dennis," she said. "My name's Geraldine, which is horrid—but Gerry's all right I think, don't you?"

"Topping," I replied.

"Then I'll make you a present of it," she said, with a grin that showed her little white teeth.

And I said "Gerry" as bold as brass.

It's jolly fine to get on to Christian names inside ten minutes, especially with the prettiest girl you've ever seen. It never occurred to me before that I was a susceptible sort of chap, but I don't mind owning that Gerry took my wicket at the first over. She had such a topping irresponsible way of talking—here, there, and everywhere. It almost took one's breath away. I voted the Guv'nor a jolly good sort for giving me the introduction.

"How old are you?" she asked.

I told her fifteen, and put the same question.

"Add ten," she said.

"Oh, rot," I said. "You're only a kid."

"Twenty-five," she replied. "I hope you don't mind?"

But I did mind, and I suppose I showed it.

"'T any rate," I said, "we can be friends just the same. After all, what's ten years?"

"That's just what I said to myself, one glorious night three weeks ago, when Ralph came to dinner with us."

It seemed funny to hear the Guv'nor called "Ralph."

"D'you mind my calling him 'Ralph'?" she asked.

"Not a bit. It'll make him feel young—you know," I added, "he's not a bit old really."

"'Course he isn't," she laughed. "Those are my ponies over there. Let's try and catch them."

We had a tremendous spree doing the bareback broncho act, and after we'd subdued the fiery mustangs we raced off to where the Guv'nor and Mr. Conrad were sitting to report progress. The Guv'nor got up to greet us.

"You seem to be getting on all right," he said.

"Beautifully," Gerry answered. "I love Dennis—don't I?" she appealed to me.

I must say I thought it rather stupid of her to say that, for it makes a fellow look a bit of an ass to have that kind of confession made to his own father. All the same, I couldn't help being pleased, and the Guv'nor seemed pleased too, and slipped a friendly arm through mine.

I SAW a lot of Gerry during the next few days, but never enough. For the more I saw the better I liked. I had never felt much interest in girls before. The few I had known I had liked well enough, but not in the same way. It sounds fearful tosh, but I actually dreamt about her. You know the gallant rescue and hairbreadth escape sort of dream, with a post-chaise to Gretna Green at the end of it.

Made me positively awkward to meet her next day, for my worst enemy couldn't accuse me of being a spring poet sort of chap. But the fact is, I went to bed thinking about her, and woke up doing the same thing, and even the Guv'nor noticed that I left half my porridge at brekker and only scoffed one egg instead of two. You may laugh, but all that sort of thing goes to show. 'Course, I never meant to say a word, and to this day I don't know how I came to be such a fool. It just happened, as these things will, while she and I were walking up and down on the terrace one night after dinner. I was going back to school next day, and that may have brought it on. We were talking about the Guv'nor, and I said I was so jolly glad she and he were such good pals. I said, too, what a frightfully straight chap he was.

"I know," she answered. "It almost frightens me sometimes."

"Oh, rot," I said.

"It does, for I can't help thinking he would never understand anyone who was less well-principled than himself."

"He's got a jolly high standard," I replied, "and he'd be frightfully hurt if one did anything shabby."

"That's what I mean."

"But you never would."

"I don't know. I'm a bit of a pickle, really. Always getting in and out of scrapes. Ask my father."

"I'd rather make up my own mind," said I.

"And have you?"

"Yes."

"Tell me what it is."

I hesitated.

"It's this," I said. "I like you—most awfully."

"And do you think you could bear the idea of my being here for good?"

It fairly took my breath away.

"Oh, Gerry," I gasped. "I could—I could! That's what I've been dying to say for ages, but I hadn't the pluck. So I sent you those daffs instead."

She stopped and looked at me, her eyebrows raised and disappearing under the loop of hair upon her forehead.

"To say what?"

"I love you!"

"Dennis, you mustn't do that—no. I thought you knew——"

"I only know I love you enormously," I repeated.

"——That I'm going to marry your father," she went on.

Once when I was a kid I fell from a hayloft, but the jolt I had on landing was nothing compared to what I felt that moment. Every part of me seemed to stop like a dropped clock, and I could only gape at her with my mouth open, while a shameful desire to blub got hold of me by the throat.

"I thought you'd guessed that. Oh, you poor darling, you mustn't look so miserable. I wanted you to be glad."

And then it came over me that she was ten years older than I was, and that lots of girls would have laughed at me—couldn't have helped themselves. But she didn't laugh, and because of that I knew what a little trump she was—what an absolute first-rater. So I took a grip of myself and managed to say:—

"I'm jolly glad, Gerry, that you've chosen the better man."

The least flicker of a smile came and went at the corners of her mouth, then she put an arm round my waist.

"It would be a good plan if you kissed me and wished me luck, wouldn't it?"

I did, and we sat side by side on a carved stone bench.

"You won't tell the Guv'nor?" I said, after a long silence.

She shook her head.

"No, it shall be a secret for all time," she answered gravely.

"Thank you, Gerry," said I. "I shall always remember that, and if ever there's the least or greatest service I can render—you'll ask me, won't you—so that I can repay?"

"But what is it you want to repay?" she asked.

"You might have laughed at me," I explained.

"One doesn't laugh at things one's proudest of," she said.

I gave her hand a mighty squeeze.

"Oh, bless you," I said, and went indoors to tell the Guv'nor what a lucky chap he was.

THEY were married during the summer term. I came up for the wedding, and I must say old Conrad fixed everything in top-hole style. It went with a whizz, and all

"'Oh, you poor darling,' she said, 'you mustn't look so miserable. I wanted you to be glad.'"

I seem to remember is the laughter, the ices, and the Guv'nor, who looked like a boy, with Gerry, pink and smiling, upon his arm. They went to Switzerland for their honeymoon, and I returned to school with a fiver in my pocket and a silly sort of lump in my throat.

We spent the Summer Vac together, and without exception it was the finest time I ever had in my life. I never knew a real mother, but I voted, if Gerry was a sample of the step variety, there wasn't much to kick at. It was great, too, the way she made the Guv'nor open out. He behaved like a two-year-old. His old seriousness was clean gone—swamped out by her high spirits and fun. To watch him helping her with the household books was as good as a play, for she could no more add nine and seven than fly, and was just as pleased with one result as another. But between them they laughed some sort of method into the enterprise. It would have been a lesson in patience to our mathematics master at Waterhouse.

It was toward the end of the holidays the Guv'nor received some correspondence that seemed to sober him down a bit. He said nothing to me, but I could see that everything wasn't quite right. He cut out some of our picnics and spent a fair amount of time writing letters and sending wires. Also he tackled me on the subject of trying for a scholarship. I told him I'd never thought of it, and he replied, in an off-hand way:—

"Still, you ought to have a pretty sound chance. Why not have a go at the Aitchin Schol?"

"It's over my head, Guv'nor."

"Don't you believe it," he said. "Try your luck, and if you pull it off I might slip you a motor-bike for Christmas."

That was something like an offer, and I made a very few hearty resolves with myself.

At the time it didn't strike me as unusual that he should have to go abroad for a couple of months. He had considerable interests in some Balkan oil-fields, and often spent a few weeks there during the autumn. So that Gerry shouldn't be dull while he was away, he took a furnished flat for her in town.

"It's bad luck, coming this year; but I shall have to see to things," he said.

I took the bad luck to mean leaving Gerry so soon after they were married.

"While you're away I shall knuckle to and make a fortune," she replied.

"Heavens!" said the Guv'nor, half comically, "I shall never be able to afford that."

For some reason Gerry coloured up.

"Don't you be so sure," she said. "You don't know what I can do. I'm a mascot, p'r'aps, and shall bring you luck."

"You've done that," said he, and pinched the end of her nose.

I FAIRLY got down to it at school that term—got my remove to the Sixth, and to my own amazement carried off the scholarship with a pretty decent margin. I don't want to boast, but I fancy the other entrants must have been well below the average. 'T any rate, the Head made a flattering speech, and I felt all sorts of a fool standing on the platform while the school cheered as though I were a hero returned from the wars. Fearful rot it was, and I was jolly glad to duck out of the little door beside the organ and make a dash across the Close with half the school yoicking and tally-hoing at my heels.

However, it was something to be bucked about, I suppose, and I was pretty full of myself when I turned up at Euston a day or two before Christmas with the prospect of the Guv'nor returning from the Near East—of Gerry on the spot, and a brand-new motor-bike thrown in. Between the three I reckoned to have a pretty gay old Christmas.

I was rather surprised that Gerry wasn't at the station to meet me, and more surprised still when I nipped into the flat to find her in the drawing-room looking white and serious.

"Good heavens! you do look rotten," I cried.

She grinned, but it wasn't one of her real kind.

"I'm all right," she answered.

"You aren't, or you'd have been at the station to meet me. Look here, stick on your hat and I'll take you out to lunch. I've heaps of boodle."

"Lucky you!" she answered. "Wish I could say the same. But lunch is ordered here."

"Oh, that'll keep."

She tipped up the end of her nose with a forefinger, but not very convincingly.

"I don't think I want to go out," she said.

"Then we'll have a merry old lunch at home," I said, and flopped down on the sofa by her side.

For a while I babbled away about what I had done at school, but it came over me that she wasn't listening very attentively.

"It's rather a feather to have won the Aitchin Schol," I said.

"Must be," she nodded. "I'm glad he'll have someone to be pleased with."

"He?"

"Ralph."

"But why do you say that?"

"Don't know."

"Sounded as if he wouldn't be pleased with you."

"P'r'aps he won't."

"I say, Gerry, what's up?" I demanded. "You keep saying things I don't get the hang of."

"Nothing's up, Dennis. Just at present stock is very low."

She looked at me, then fired a direct question.

"Dennis, have you ever been a disappointment to your father?"

"Chuck it!" I said. "You're not going to come the heavy step-mother on me."

"I asked seriously."

"Oh, I don't know. P'r'aps, but not on purpose."

And I told her the yarn about the gambling business. I thought she looked even paler when I had finished.

"Did he forgive you?"

"Yes, rather! You see, I promised I wouldn't touch another gamble at school."

"I see—and you kept your promise?"

"Yes, I have."

"Supposing you'd broken it?"

"I shouldn't have, because——"

"Well?"

"I think he'd have been most awfully cut up."

"And you'd have hated that?"

"Of course."

Gerry rose and stood by the mantelpiece.

"I suppose it's easy for some people to do the right thing." She rapped with her foot. "It's jolly easy for others not to. Dennis, can you recognize the rebellion germ when you see it?"

"Rebellion germ?" I repeated.

She nodded.

"Someone shakes a head and says, 'Be

careful! the ice won't hold,' and you snap your fingers and slide across it."

"Oh, rather! I've done that."

"It isn't perverse, you know—only silly and independent; but it's so jolly hard to go home afterwards and shiver before the fire while your wet clothes are steaming on the rack. That someone thinks you did it because you've no sense of right—that someone can't understand it was because you wanted to be right yourself—or be a help. There! That's lunch—come along."

"Gerry," I said, "I think you've forgotten our 'pact. You promised to let me help you if ever you were in need."

"But I'm not," she answered.

"Then answer me one question, and I won't bother you again."

"Go ahead."

"Is—is there anything wrong between you and the Guv'nor?"

She hesitated, then :—

"There isn't anyone in the world I love so much or I want to please more—if I'm down it's on my own account."

"Well, then, why——?"

"Full stop," said Gerry, and taking my arm led me into lunch.

I was pretty bucked when later in the afternoon I got a wire from the Guv'nor saying he would be at Charing Cross at ten-thirty next morning. "Bravo, you, for earning the bike," he wired; "we'll buy it to-morrow or burst."

Gerry had a wire, too, which read rather mysteriously—"Everything O.K. So don't worry any more."

I asked what it meant.

"Only that I'm much luckier than I've any right to be," she answered, and that was all.

I GOT up bright and early next morning and wandered into the drawing-room to have a glance at the papers. I didn't notice Gerry until I almost stumbled upon her. She was seated at the writing-table, her head in the angle of her arm, and her little shoulders shaken with dry, silent sobs.

"Gerry—Gerry!" I cried. "Gerry, what is it?"

For answer she sat up quickly—snatched at two or three opened letters that lay on the flap before her and dropped them into the drawer. She turned the key in the lock, withdrew it, and put it in one of the pigeon-holes.

"You shouldn't have come in like that—you startled me."

"I'm sorry—I didn't know——"

"It's all right—it's nothing. I—I'll go and finish dressing." She turned at the door. "I think you'd better go and meet Ralph at the station. I—I'm too miserable with myself."

"But, Gerry, it 'ud hurt him frightfully if you weren't there."

"Oh, let me alone," she wailed, and the door closed.

To this day I don't know whether I acted rightly or wrongly. I only know I felt sure the two people I cared for most were drifting apart. There is a wholesome enough code about touching private correspondence, but there was never a code invented which covered every possibility. That's why I found myself unlocking Gerry's table drawer before I had time to realize the rights or wrongs of the case. The first letter I picked up was enough for me.

"Dear Mrs. Casement" (it ran), "I shall feel obliged if you would forward your cheque for £70 before the 27th inst. I trust that your unlucky bank will not discourage you from another visit to our tables."

It was signed "P. Brander," and in the top right-hand corner was embossed an ace of spades, with an address in the West Cromwell Road.

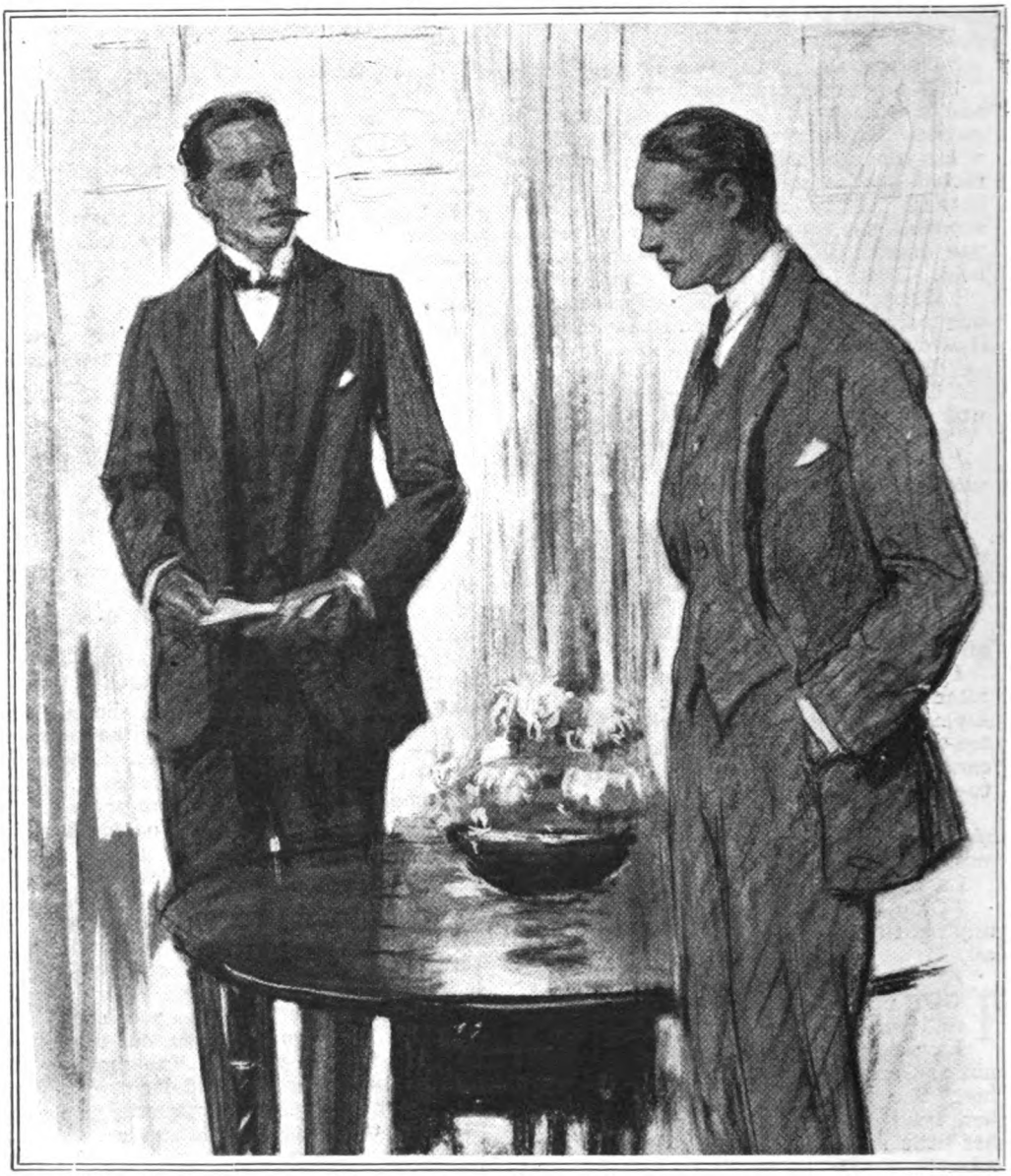
I put the letter back in the drawer and returned the key, and sat down to think. Gerry had been gambling, and she couldn't pay. Sooner or later she would have to tell father. Of course, I reasoned all wrong, but I guessed she was frightened to make the confession. Perhaps, like myself, she had promised to have nothing to do with gambling, and knew what a stab it would give him to know she had broken her word. Poor little kid, and this ought to have been such a rippingly happy day for her, too. I was certain she had meant no harm, and probably had just tumbled accidentally into a gambling set and been thoroughly duped. A wild desire to go round and punch the head of P. Brander came over me, but there was no good in that notion. The money was owing, and someone would have to parker up. Then I thought of my promise to Gerry, and with the thought came an idea. It was a good idea, but perhaps I sha'n't be blamed if I didn't jump at it, and instead wasted time sorting my mind for a possible alternative. I came back to it at last, driven, I suppose, by the extremity of the situation. There was no other way that I could see, and when I walked into the dining-room I was resolved to follow it.

Gerry came in two minutes after, and I tackled her straight away.

"Look here," I said, "you've got to come to the station, and what's more, you've got to say nothing over Christmas about what's been worrying you."

"Any more orders?" said she.

"No, that's all. But as a favour I ask you



"The Guv'nor took out his note-case and counted seven tenners upon the table."

to make the Guv'nor's home-coming a cheery one. You're too much of a sport to refuse that."

"Did you ever hear Ralph say put off till to-morrow what should be done to-day?"

"He doesn't know everything," I answered. "You will do what I ask, won't you?"

"All right, have it your own way," she nodded.

The Guv'nor looked tremendously fit, and I never saw him in better fettle. He was no end bucked about the Aitchin Scholarship.

"I think we'll have to put a side-car on that motor-bike," he said.

Gerry helped him unpack, and from the dining-room where I was waiting I heard them chattering away like a couple of kids over the job. Presently he drifted in to me for a glass of sherry and a biscuit, and I chose that moment for the ordeal.

"I'm awfully pleased about you, old chap," he said. "It's first-rate! Getting your remove is good, too. I won't keep you talking now, as I expect you're

crazy to get on with this shopping expedition."

I crossed over to the door and closed it.

"There's something I wanted to say first," I blurted out.

"Well? On you go!"

"It—it's about—oh, look here, you remember that beastly gambling business?"

"Pff! We buried that ages ago."

"N-no—not altogether," I said.

He shot a queer glance at me, then shook his head.

"My dear old fellow, when you gave me your word off your own bat that you'd never touch another card at school, I knew there was nothing more to worry about on that score."

I grabbed at a straw—a very wispy one.

"It—it was a roulette board," I stammered.

I had seen his mouth go hard before on one or two occasions, but never for anything I had done. Ugh! How I hated it!

"That's rather a miserable quibble, Dennis," he said, slowly.

"I know," I answered. "You—you don't think I'm proud of myself."

He lit a cigar and wandered towards the window. The silence seemed to last for ages.

"Aren't you going to say anything, Dad?"

"I'm doing my best," he answered, "to find what solace I can in the fact that you told me."

I knew how perfectly rotten my reply was bound to appear.

"I had to—because—because I lost such a lot."

The look on his face when he turned round almost made me chuck the whole business and tell him the truth.

"Oh, so that's the way of it? How much?"

I mumbled the amount under my breath.

"Seventy pounds," he repeated. "Seventy?"

THEN it was that lying seemed to come easily, and I told a rotten story about a rich chap I'd been playing with who'd taken the money off me. "And he threatens," I added, "to write to the Head if I don't pay up straight away."

I received a very emphatic answer to that.

"Does he want to get expelled himself, then?"

One lie gives the lead to another.

"He left school this term," I replied.

It was characteristic of my father that he never asked the fellow's name.

"You gave him I O U's?"

I shook my head.

"Then he's no proof?"

"None."

"And that never occurred to you as a solution?"

I flamed up.

"I shouldn't have thought you'd make a rotten suggestion like that."

"I asked *you*," he said, pointedly. "The sample of honesty you've given me is pretty imperfect."

And that was true enough, too. I dropped my head.

"And so," he went on, "you expect me to frank the debt?"

"Yes," I mumbled.

"I see—you break the rules and your word and I pay. Is that the idea?"

"It's a debt of honour."

"I won't discuss the honour," he said, "except to remind you that that kind of debt should be met by the person who contracts it."

"I haven't the money, Dad."

"Then you must raise a mortgage."

"There's nothing I can mortgage."

"I had put aside rather more than that sum to buy you a motor-bike."

I saw then what he was driving at.

"Oh, Dad!" I gasped.

"Anything wrong with the suggestion?"

It wouldn't have been so bad if I hadn't told some of my particular pals that I was going to have the motor-bike. Selbourne and Cuffley both had Douglases, and we'd fixed a run together for Boxing-Day. Besides, I never had wanted a thing so much before.

The Guv'nor put the question again.

"No," I blurted out, "it's fair enough."

He took out his note-case and counted seven tenners upon the table.

"Take 'em," he said, "and get it into your head that I'm no better pleased to spend the money this way than you are. I think we can call it a disappointment all round." Then all of a sudden his voice went queer. "Oh, damn you!" he said. "Why did you give me your word?"

I just picked up the notes mechanically and put them in my pocket. At the door he turned, took a brace on himself, and said:—

"You can count yourself lucky I was able to pay. I didn't tell you before, but things have been touch and go. If I hadn't been on the spot at the right moment we should have gone under good and hard."

"If I'd known——" I began.

"I'll do you the credit to believe that," he cut in. "I left you in ignorance because I didn't want to worry you. Gerry knew."

"Gerry knew?" I repeated.

But before he had time to answer Gerry, wrapped in furs, came into the room.

"Taxi's waiting," she cried; "we ought to hurry."

"I'll just get my coat," said the Guv'nor, and went out.

"Hurry up, Dennis."

"I'm not coming," I said.

"But we're going to Great Portland Street after lunch."

"I'm not going to buy a motor-bike."

"Not going to buy——?"

"No. Gerry, did you know the Guv'nor had been nearly broke?"

"'Course I did."

"And yet——" I began.

"What?"

"Oh, nothing."

The Guv'nor came in buttoning his coat.

"Ready," he said.

"Ralph, what's wrong with Dennis? He says he's not coming out."

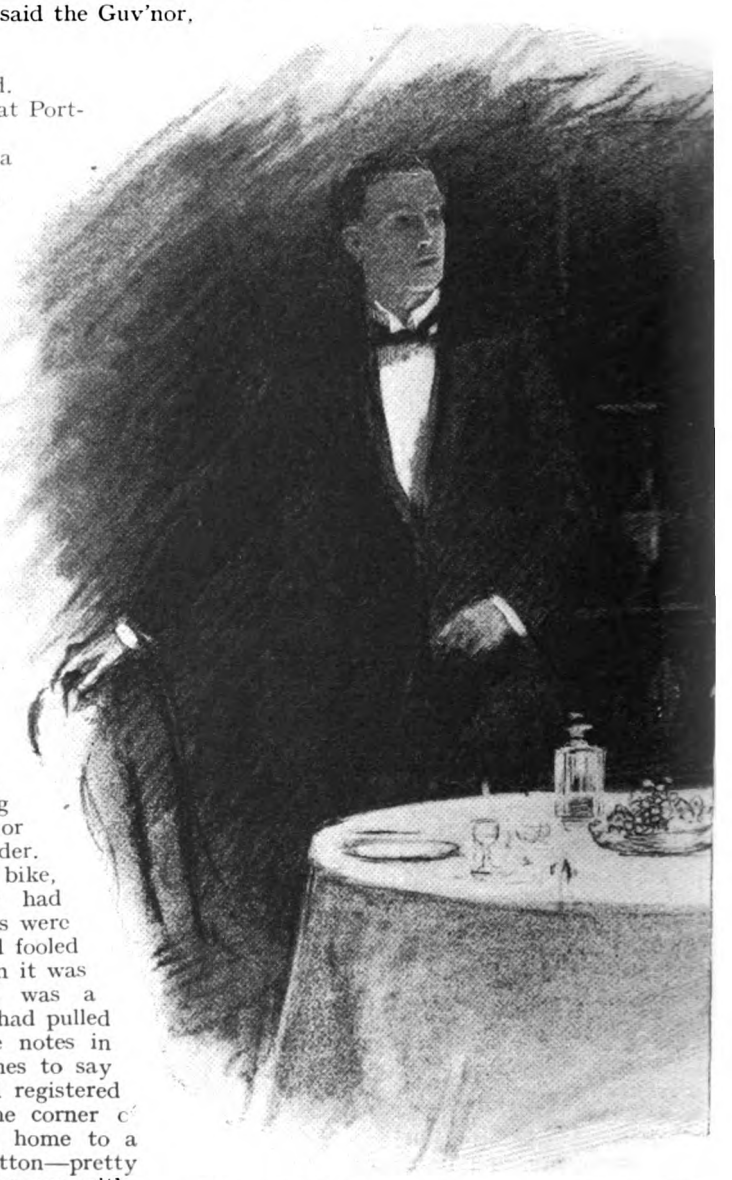
"I expect he has something else to do. Come along, dear."

I heard the front door slam and presently from below the hum of a taxi moving up the street.

Looking back, I'm not really so ashamed of having blubbed. I'd let the Guv'nor think me an absolute outsider. I'd done myself in for the bike, and, worst of all, Gerry had known all along that things were dicky and spite of that had fooled about and lost money when it was needed. Oh, Lord, that was a rotten day. After a bit I had pulled myself together, stuck the notes in an envelope with a few lines to say where they came from, and registered it at the post-office at the corner of the street. Then I came home to a solitary lunch of cold mutton—pretty near the bone—and an afternoon without a soul to speak to.

It was after six before the Guv'nor and Gerry returned. He had been making a great effort to seem in form, but I guessed it was only a sham. What I had told him earlier in the day had done away with his real high spirits. Gerry, too, in spite of her laughter and talk, had the air of being worried and nervous. I was frankly too miserable to pretend to be otherwise, and as soon as I could manage it slipped off to change for dinner.

While I was changing the Guv'nor came into my room to me.



"Then the Guv'nor spoke one word very softly,

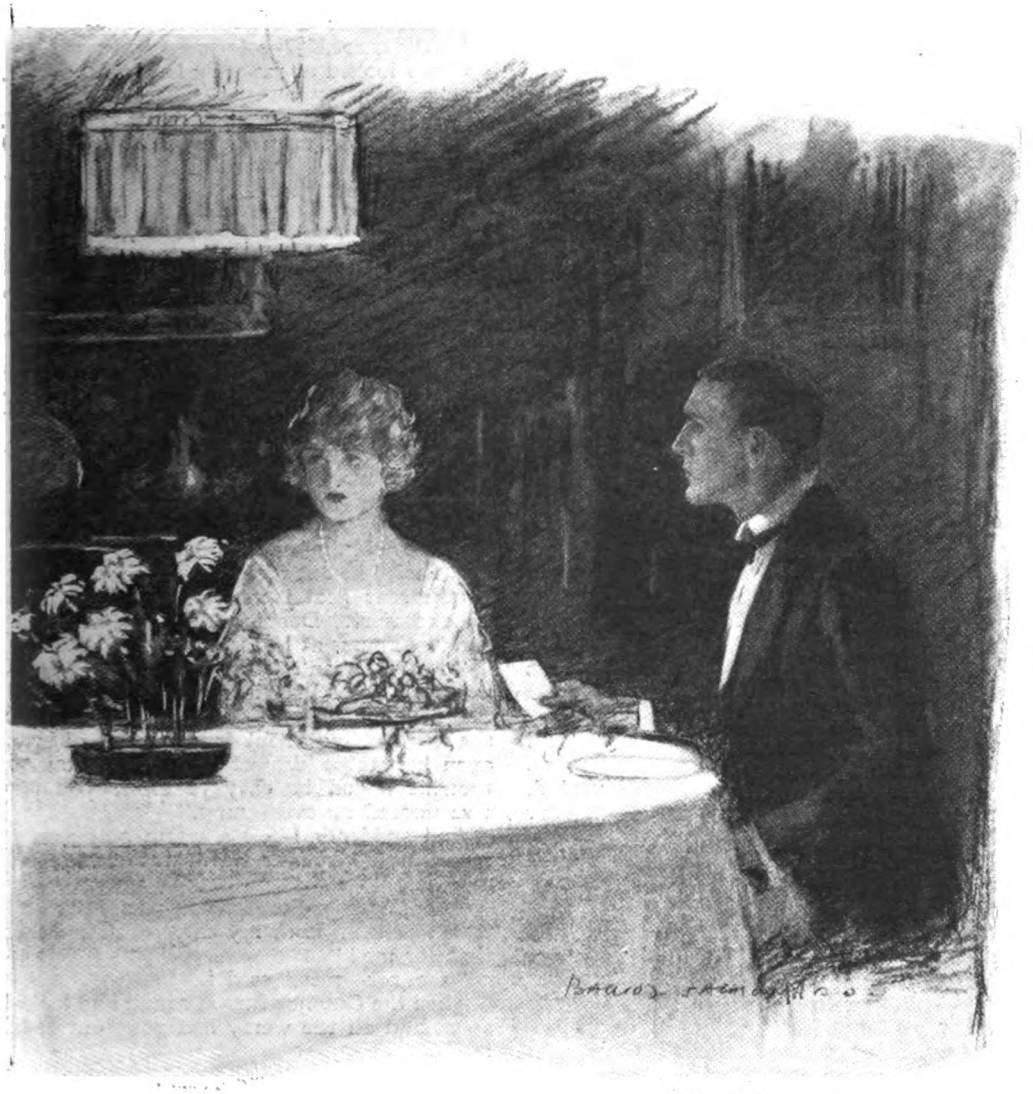
"Look here," said he, "the thing's over, Dennis, and there's no good brooding over it. We'll get it out of our heads as soon as we can."

"Are you likely to get it out of yours?" I blurted out.

"I shall do my best. Let's shake hands."

"No," I stammered. "You're only trying to be decent—but you think all the time I've behaved like a bounder."

He didn't answer that, and I couldn't blame him.



and it cut across me like a whip. 'Liar!' I sprang to my feet. 'That's not true—I——'"

"I've offered to shake hands," he repeated. "It's your own affair if you'd rather not."

He waited for a moment, but I did nothing.

"Very well," he said, "but I must ask you not to sulk in front of Gerry. That isn't playing the game."

The door clicked and he was gone. I suppose I owe it to his departure that I didn't swing round and give away the whole show. It gave me a minute to think, and I saw what a measley trick it would be to croak just because the load was heavier than I'd bargained for. Besides, I always had wanted to do something for Gerry, and I'd got my wish. It's rather queer, but there's a kind of satisfaction in taking gruel for a thing you haven't done. You can be so jolly sorry for yourself and, somehow, that kind of sets you up. 'T any rate, I came to dinner that night determined to make the best of it and, though I dare say it wasn't much of a show, I'm glad I made the effort. Once I saw the Guv'nor looking at me approvingly, and that helped no end. While we were at

dessert the maid entered with a note on a salver.

"A messenger brought it by hand," she said.

The Guv'nor opened it in a mechanical sort of way and glanced at the contents.

"There's no answer," he said, and Nellie went out.

He seemed to puzzle for a moment, then he glanced queerly at me.

"I've made a mistake," he said. "This is intended for you."

I HADN'T the smallest idea what it was, and held out my hand. As he passed the letter over I caught sight of an ace of spades in the top right-hand corner. Gerry must have seen it, too, for the glimpse I had of her face showed it to be quite white. I suppose I turned a pretty deep crimson. I know my cheeks felt on fire.

"Yes, it's for me," I stammered.

Then the Guv'nor spoke one word very softly, and it cut across me like a whip.

"Liar!"

I sprang to my feet. "That's not true—I——"

"Every word was a lie. Get out of the room. I'll talk to you later."

For a second I faced him, then I saw how hopeless it all was and turned to obey. As I touched the door-handle Gerry spoke.

"I want to see that letter," she said.

"Let him go," said my father. "I d rather you knew nothing of this."

"I want to see that letter," she repeated.

"You were told to go, Dennis. Is it your wish she should see the letter?"

"N–no," I stammered, and pulled open the door.

"Dennis, come back."

"Oh, Gerry, shut up," I cried. "Don't be such a fool."

"I want—I'm going to see that letter."

"Why?" he demanded. "What interest can it have for you?"

"I want it, because I believe it is mine."

"It isn't yours—it isn't," I returned.

"Then it has nothing to do with a debt for seventy pounds?" she asked.

For a second my father stared at her bewildered, then he turned to me with what seemed the only explanation.

"So you tried to get the money from her first, eh?"

It was the only chance and I took it.

"Yes," I said. "It's no good, Gerry, I had to pay up, so I went to the Guv'nor and asked him for it."

"For what?"

"The seventy pounds. For Heaven's sake don't ask any more about it. It's my pigeon; let's leave it at that." And I tried to signal her to be quiet.

Gerry looked at me very hard, then at the Guv'nor.

"Ralph," she said, "I don't understand. That debt was mine. A gambling debt. I lost at roulette. Dennis has nothing to do with it—nothing at all."

"Yours?"

"Yes."

"Wait a minute," he said. "Let me understand this." Then he turned away and put his elbows on the mantelpiece.

"Oh, Ralph, I didn't mean any harm. You were hard up, and I thought it would be so splendid to make some money—to pay for the flat and the housekeeping—so, if things went really wrong, I should have helped. Of course I lost, and I was miserable to have been such a useless fool. I didn't know you would feel like this about it."

"I shouldn't have cared if you'd lost a thousand," he answered; "but to let my boy be the scapegoat is more than I can swallow with comfort. Dennis, old chap, I'm awfully sorry. Yours, at least, was a fine effort."

"No, it wasn't," I cried, "it jolly well wasn't. I just butted in where I'd no right. She never asked me—never told me. I saw she was fretting about something, so I broke open her table drawer and found out. I thought it 'ud be easy to make you pay. I've messed up everything."

And suddenly I felt a warm soft arm go round my neck and a warm wet cheek touch mine.

"Oh, Dennis, Dennis, you perfect sweet," trembled a voice in my ear. "You did all that for me!"

"Oh, rot—rats," said I.

Then the Guv'nor turned round and looked at us, and all the worry had gone out of his face.

"You queer kids," he said, "hanging on to one another as if the bottom had fallen out of the universe. And, Lord knows, it hasn't. No, don't let go—but it comes over me very forcibly that if three isn't too many I'd like to join in."

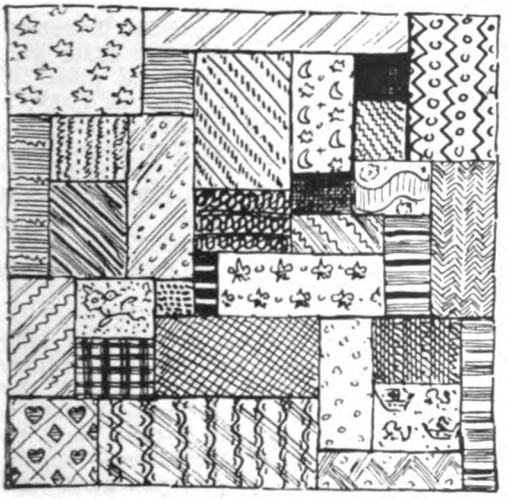
LATER on he said:—

"By the way, I ordered that bike this afternoon. It was weak of me, but I did it. A kind of offering to the gods, it was."

PERPLEXITIES. By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

550.—THE PATCHWORK QUILT.

HERE is a patchwork quilt that was produced by two young ladies for some charitable purpose. When they came to join their work it was found that each lady had contributed a portion of exactly the same



size and shape. It is an amusing puzzle to discover just where these two portions are joined together. Can you divide the quilt into two parts, simply by cutting the stitches, so that the portions shall be of the same size and shape? You may think you have solved it in a few minutes, but—wait and see.

551.—TWO QUEER WORDS.

I SAW the happy pair pass by,
New wed midst joy and acclamation.
One simple English word, thought I,
Exactly summed the situation.
But years have passed and love is slain,
And now they go divergent ways,
For they have been divorced. Again
One simple word quite fits the case.
The second word is like the first—
Two central letters just reversed.

552.—A WAGES PARADOX.

A CORRESPONDENT asks me, "Can one receive less money per week when actually earning more per annum?" Yes, it is quite possible. Can you think of a way in which it may occur?

553.—THE QUEEN AND THE CHAIR.

I PRESENT another mid-Victorian enigma, the answer to which seems to be lost. What is it?

If I were to ask the Queen and the chair
Both to tell me what they were,
And then should beg of you to bear
To the top of the house the Queen and her chair,
The Queen, her chair, and yourself, all three,
In the very same sentence would answer me.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

545.—COUNTER SOLITAIRE.

PLAY in the following manner and all the counters except one will be removed in eight moves, and the final leap is made by No. 1, as required: 6–14, 16–15, 4–12, (6–16, 6–5), 3–6, (8–7, 8–3), 2–10, (1–9, 1–2, 1–4, 1–13, 1–8, 1–11). The final move of six leaps is very pretty.

546.—THE "ARK" RECONSTRUCTED.

THE answer is, "the gopher would." The gopher is a species of burying animals, common in America. Also the Ark was constructed of gopher-wood.

547.—WORD ENDINGS.

HERE are nine words with different endings, all having the sound "shun" in the last syllable: *Shun*, posi*tion*, coer*cion*, ver*sion*, cu*shion*, connex*ion*, fal*chion*, lunch*eon*, and pas*sion*.

548.—PLAYING FOR MARBLES.

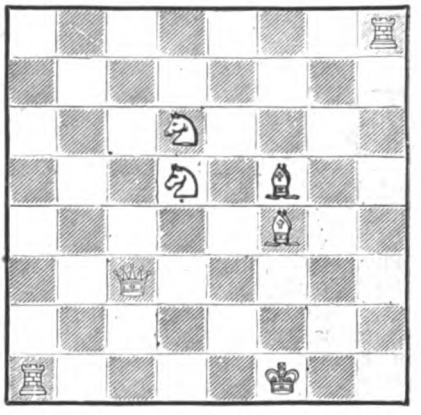
TOM and Fred must have each held one hundred marbles at the beginning of play.

549.—THE TUBE STAIRS.

THE least common multiple of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 is 420. Deduct 1 and 419 is a possible number for the stairs, and every addition of 420 will also work. So the number of risers might be either 419, 839, 1,259, 1,679, etc., only we were told that there were fewer than 1,000 and that there was another stairway on the line with fewer steps that had the same peculiarity. Therefore there must have been 839 risers in the Curling Street stairway.

535.—THE GUARDED CHESSBOARD.

REFERRING back to this problem, it may easily be solved, as many correspondents found, if we place both bishops on the same colour. Though I do not know how the conditions were originally worded, it was thought best to assume that this was not allowed. Yet



no ideal solution seems possible with the bishops on opposite colours, and it may be that the author relied on the trick. Mr. Arthur Wheeler found the solution we published and another which we now give, in which only one knight is unguarded. Mr. J. Morrow, Mr. T. S. Moore, and Mr. T. D. Shaw (?) also require only one piece to be unguarded.

539.—HALF THE ALPHABET.

SEVERAL readers send AMBIDEXTROUSLY, which contains fourteen different letters, and SUBORDINATELY, with thirteen letters. AMPHIGENOUSLY is also given.

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK

by

H·C·McNEILE
("SAPPER")

ILLUSTRATED BY
CHAS CROMBIE

I.

"BUT, Bill, I don't understand. How much did you borrow from this man?"

Sybil Daventry looked at her brother, sitting huddled up in his chair, with a little frown.

"I borrowed a thousand," he answered, sulkily. "And like a fool I didn't read the thing he made me sign—at least, not carefully. Hang it, I've only had the money six months, and now he's saying that I owe him over two. I saw something about twenty-five per cent., and now I find it was twenty-five per cent. a month. And the swine is pressing for payment, unless——" He broke off and stared into the fire shamefacedly

"Unless what?" demanded his sister.

"Well, you see, it's this way." The boy stammered a little, and refused to look at her. "I was jolly well up the spout when this blighter told me what I owed him, and I suppose I must have showed it pretty clearly. Anyway, I was propping up the bar at the Cri., getting a cocktail, when a fellow standing next me started gassing. Not a bad sort of cove at all; knows you very well by sight."

"Knows me?" said the girl, bewildered. "Who was he?"

"I'm coming to that later," went on her brother. "Well, we had a couple more and then he suggested tearing a chop together. And I don't know—he seemed so decent and all that—that I told him I was in the soup. Told him the whole yarn and asked his advice sort of business. Well, as I say, he was bally sporting about it all, and finally asked me who the bird was who had tied up the boodle. I told him, and here's the lucky part of the whole show—this fellow Morrison knew him. Morrison was the man I was lunching with."

He paused and lit a cigarette, while the girl stared at him gravely.

"Well," she said at length, "go on."

"It was after lunch that he got busy. He said to me: 'Look here, Daventry, you've made a bally fool of yourself, but you're not the first. I'll write a note to Messrs. Smith and Co.'—those are the warriors who gave me the money—'and try and persuade them to give you more time, or even possibly reduce the rate of interest.' Of course, I was all on this, and I arranged to lunch with him again next day, after Smith and Co. had had time to functon. And sure enough they did. Wrote a letter in which they were all over me; any friend of Mr. Morrison's was entitled to special treatment, and so on and so forth. Naturally I was as bucked as a dog with two tails, and asked Morrison if I couldn't do something more material than just thank him. And—er—he—I mean it was then he told me he knew you by sight."

HE glanced at his sister, and then quickly looked away again.

"He suggested—er—that perhaps I could arrange to introduce him to you; that it would be an honour he would greatly appreciate, and all that sort of rot."

The girl was sitting very still. "Yes," she said, quietly, "and you—agreed."

"Well, of course I did. Hang it, he's quite a decent fellow. Bit Cityish to look at, and I shouldn't think he knows which end of a horse goes first. But he's got me out of the devil of a hole, Sybil, and the least you can do is to be moderately decent to the bird. I mean it's not asking much, is it? I left the governor looking at him in the hall as if he was just going to tread on his face, and that long slab—your pal—is gazing at him through his eyeglass as if he was mud."

"He's not my pal, Bill." Sybil Daventry's colour heightened a little.

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" Well, you asked him here, anyway," grunted the boy. Then with a sudden change of tone he turned to her appealingly. " Syb, old girl — for the Lord's sake play the game. You know what the governor is, and if he hears about this show— especially as it's— as it's not the first time—there'll be the deuce to pay. You know he said last time that if it happened again he'd turn me out of the house. And the old man is as stubborn as a mule. I only want you to be a bit decent to Morrison."

She looked at him with a grave smile. " If Mr. Morrison is satisfied with my being decent to him, as you put it, I'm perfectly prepared to play the game. But ——" She frowned and rose abruptly. " Come on, and I'll have a look at him."

In silence they went downstairs. Tea had just been brought in, and the house - party was slowly drifting into the hall. But Sybil barely noticed them; her eyes were fixed on the man talking to her father. Or rather, at the moment, her father was talking to the man, and his remark was painfully audible.

" There is a very good train back to London at seven-thirty, Mr.—ah—Mr.——"

Her brother stepped forward. " But I say, Dad," he said, nervously, " I asked Morrison to stop the night. I've just asked Sybil, and she says she can fix him up somewhere."

" How d'you do, Mr. Morrison? Of course you must stop the night."

" How d'you do, Mr. Morrison?" With a charming smile she held out her hand. " Of course you must stop the night."

Then she moved away to the tea-table, feeling agreeably relieved; it was better than she had expected. The man was well-dressed; perhaps, to her critical eye, a little too well-dressed — but still quite presentable.

" You averted a catastrophe, Miss Daventry." A lazy voice beside her interrupted her thoughts, and with a smile she turned to the speaker.

" Dad is most pestilentially rude at times, isn't he? And Bill told me he left *you* staring at the poor man as if he was an insect."

Archie Longworth laughed.

" He'd just contradicted your father flatly as you came downstairs. And on a matter concerning horses. However — the breeze has passed. But, tell me," he stared at her gravely, " why the sudden invasion? "

Her eyebrows went up a little. " May I ask why not? " she said, coldly. " Surely my brother can invite a friend to the house if he wishes."

" I stand corrected," answered Longworth, quietly. " Has he known him long? "

" I haven't an idea," said the girl. " And after all, Mr. Longworth, I hadn't known you very long when I asked you."

And then, because she realized that there was a possibility of construing rather more into her words than she had intended, she turned abruptly to speak to another guest. So she failed to see the sudden inscrutable look that came into Archie Longworth's keen blue eyes—the quick clenching of his powerful fists. And when a few minutes later she again turned to him, he was just his usual lazy self.

"Do you think your logic is very good?" he demanded. "You might have made a mistake as well."

"You mean that you think my brother has?" she said, quickly.

"It is visible on the surface to the expert eye," he returned, gravely. "But, in addition, I happen to have inside information."

"Do you know Mr. Morrison, then?"

He nodded. "Yes, I have—er—met him before."

"But he doesn't know you," cried the girl.

"No—at least—er—we'll leave it at that. And I would be obliged, Miss Daventry, in case you happen to be speaking to him, if you would refrain from mentioning the fact that I know him." He stared at her gravely.

"You're very mysterious, Mr. Longworth," said the girl, with an attempt at lightness.

"And if I may I will prolong my visit until our friend departs," continued Longworth.

"Why, of course," she said, bending over the tea-tray. "You weren't thinking of going—going yet, were you?"

"I was thinking after lunch that I should have to go to-morrow," he said, putting down his tea-cup.

"But why so soon?" she asked, and her voice was low. "Aren't you enjoying yourself?"

"In the course of a life that has taken me into every corner of the globe," he answered, slowly, "I have never dreamed that I could be so utterly and perfectly happy as I have been here. It has opened my mind to a vista of the Things that Might Be—if the Things that Had Been were different. But as you grow older, Sybil, you will learn one bitter truth: no human being can ever be exactly what he seems. Masks! just masks! And underneath—God and that being alone know."

He rose abruptly, and she watched him bending over Lady Granton with his habitual lazy grace. The indolent smile was round his lips—the irrepressible twinkle was in his eyes. But for the first time he had called her Sybil; for the first time—she *knew*. The vague forebodings conjured up by his words were swamped by that one outstanding fact; she *knew*. And nothing else mattered.

II.

IT was not until Morrison joined her in the conservatory after dinner that she found herself called on to play the part set her by her brother.

She had gone there—though nothing would have induced her to admit the fact—in the hope that someone else would follow: the man with the lazy blue eyes and the eyeglass. And then instead of him had come Morrison, with a shade too much deference in his manner, and a shade too little control of the smirk on his face. With a sudden sick feeling she realized at that moment exactly where she stood. Under a debt of obligation to this man—under the necessity of a *tête-à-tête* with him, one, moreover, when, if she was to help Bill, she must endeavour to be extra nice.

For a while the conversation was commonplace, while she feverishly longed for someone to come in and relieve the tension. But Bridge was in progress, and there was Snooker in the billiard-room, and at length she resigned herself to the inevitable. Presumably she would have to thank him for his kindness to Bill; after all he undoubtedly had been very good to her brother.

"Bill has told me, Mr. Morrison, how kind you've been in the way you've helped him over this—this unfortunate affair." She plunged valiantly, and gave a sigh of relief as she cleared the first fence.

Morrison waved a deprecating hand. "Don't mention it, Miss Daventry, don't mention it. But—er—of course, something will have to be done, and—well, there's no good mincing matters—done very soon."

The girl's face grew a little white, but her voice was quite steady.

"But he told me that you had arranged things with these people. Please smoke, if you want to."

Morrison bowed his thanks and carefully selected a cigarette. The moment for which he had been playing had now arrived, in circumstances even more favourable than he had dared to hope.

"Up to a point that is quite true," he remarked, quietly. "Messrs. Smith and Co. have many ramifications of business—money-lending being only one of the irons they have in the fire. And because I have had many dealings with the firm professionally—over the sale of precious stones, I may say, which is my own particular line of work—they were disposed to take a lenient view about the question of the loan. Not press for payment, and perhaps—though I can't promise this—even be content with a little less interest. But—er—Miss Daventry, it's the other thing where the trouble is going to occur."

The girl stared at him with dilated eyes. "What other thing, Mr. Morrison?"

"Hasn't your brother told you?" said Morrison, surprised. "Oh, well, perhaps I—er—shouldn't have mentioned it."

"Go on, please." Her voice was low. "What is this other thing?"

For a moment he hesitated—a well-simulated hesitation. Then he shrugged his shoulders slightly.

"WELL—if you insist. As a matter of fact, your brother didn't tell me about it, and I only found it out in the course of my conversation with one of the Smith partners. Apparently some weeks ago he bought some distinctly valuable jewellery—a pearl-necklace, to be exact—from a certain firm. At least, when I say he bought it—he did not pay for it. He gave your father's name as a reference, and the firm considered it satisfactory. It was worth about eight hundred pounds, this necklace, and your very stupid brother, instead of giving it to the lady whom, presumably, he had got it for, became worse than stupid. He became crin.nal."

"What do you mean?" The girl was looking at him terrified.

"He pawned this necklace which he hadn't paid for, Miss Daventry, which is, I regret to say, a criminal offence. And the trouble of the situation is that the firm he bought the pearls from has just found it out. He pawned it at a place which is one of the ramifications of Smith and Co., who gave him, I believe, a very good price for it—over five hundred pounds. The firm, in the course of business, two or three days ago—and this is the incredibly unfortunate part of it—happened to show this self-same necklace, while they were selling other things, to the man it had originally come from. Of course, being pawned, it wasn't for sale—but the man recognized it at once. And then the fat was in the fire."

"Do you mean to say," whispered the girl, "that—that they might send him to prison?"

"Unless something is done very quickly, Miss Daventry, the matter will certainly come into the law courts. Messrs. Gross and Sons"—a faint noise from the darkness at the end of the conservatory made him swing round suddenly, but everything was silent again—"Messrs. Gross and Sons are very difficult people in many ways. They are the people it came from originally, I may tell you. And firms, somewhat naturally, differ, like human beings. Some are disposed to be lenient—others are not. I'm sorry to say Gross and Sons are one of those who are not."

"But couldn't you see them, or something, and explain?"

"My dear Miss Daventry," said Morrison, gently, "I must ask you to be reasonable. What can I explain? Your brother wanted money, and he adopted a criminal method of getting it. That, I am afraid—ugly as it sounds—is all there is to it."

"Then, Mr. Morrison—can nothing be done?" She bent forward eagerly, her hands clasped, her lips slightly parted; and once again came that faint noise from the end of the conservatory.

But Mr. Morrison was too engrossed to heed it this time; the nearness, the appeal of this girl, who from the time he had first seen her six months previously at a theatre had dominated his life, was making his senses swim. And with it the veneer began to drop; the hairy heel began to show, though he made a tremendous endeavour to keep himself in check.

"There is one thing," he said, hoarsely. "And I hope you will understand that I should not have been so precipitate—but for the urgency of your brother's case. If I go to Messrs. Gross and say to them that a prosecution by them would affect me personally, I think I could persuade them to take no further steps."

Wonder was beginning to dawn in the girl's eyes. "Affect you personally?" she repeated.

"If, for instance, I could tell them that for family reasons—urgent, strong family reasons—they would be doing me a great service by letting matters drop, I think they would do it."

She rose suddenly—wonder replaced by horror. She had just realized his full meaning.

"What on earth are you talking about, Mr. Morrison?" she said, haughtily.

And then the heel appeared in all its hairiness. "If I may tell them," he leered, "that I am going to marry into the family I'll guarantee they will do nothing more."

"Marry you?" The biting scorn in her tone changed the leer to a snarl.

"Yes—marry me, or see your brother jugged. Money won't save him—so there's no good going to your father. Money will square up the Smith show—it won't square the other." And then his tone changed. "Why not, little girl? I'm mad about you; have been ever since I saw you at a theatre six months ago. I'm pretty well off even for these days, and——" He came towards her, his arms outstretched, while she backed away from him, white as a sheet. Her hands were clenched, and it was just as she had retreated as far as she could, and the man was almost on her, that she saw red. One hand went up; hit him—hit the brute—was her only coherent thought. And the man, realizing it, paused—an ugly look in his eyes.

Then occurred the interruption. A

"He came towards her, his arms outstretched, while she backed away from him, white as a sheet."

strangled snort, as of a sleeper awakening, came from behind some palms, followed by the creaking of a chair. With a stifled curse Morrison fell back and the girl's hand dropped to her side as the branches parted and Archie Longworth, rubbing his eyes, stepped into the light.

"Lord save us, Miss Daventry, I've been asleep," he said, stifling a yawn. "I knew I oughtn't to have had a third glass of port. Deuced bad for the liver, but very pleasant for all that, isn't it, Mr.—Mr. Morrison?"

He smiled engagingly at the scowling Morrison, and adjusted his eyeglass.

"You sleep very silently, Mr. Longworth," snarled that worthy.

"Yes—used to win prizes for it at an infant school. Most valuable asset in class. If one snores it disconcerts the lecturer."

Morrison swung round on his heel. "I would like an answer to my suggestion by to-morrow, Miss Daventry," he said, softly.

"Perhaps I might have the pleasure of a walk where people don't sleep off the effects of dinner."

With a slight bow he left the conservatory, and the girl sat down weakly.

"Pleasant type of bird, isn't he?" drawled Longworth, watching Morrison's retreating back.

"He's a brute—an utter brute," whispered the girl, shakily.

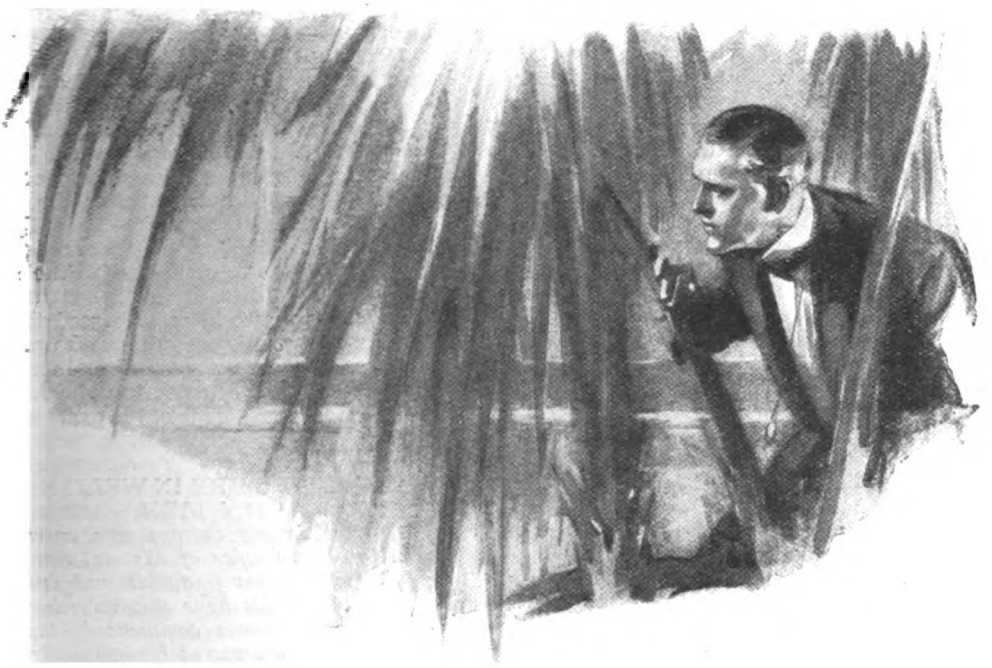
"I thought the interview would leave you with that impression," agreed the man.

She sat up quickly. "Did you hear what was said?"

"Every word. That's why I was there." He smiled at her calmly.

"Then why didn't you come out sooner?" she cried, indignantly.

"I wanted to hear what he had to say, and at the same time I didn't want you to biff him on the jaw—which from your attitude I gathered you were on the point of doing."



" Why not ? I'd have given anything to have smacked his face."

" I know. I'd have given anything to have seen you do it. But—not yet. In fact, to-morrow you've got to go for a walk with him."

" I flatly refuse ! " cried Sybil Daventry.

" More than that," continued Longworth, calmly, " you've got to keep him on the hook. Play with him ; let him think he's got a chance."

" But why ? " she demanded. " I loathe him."

" Because it is absolutely essential that he should remain here until the day after to-morrow at the earliest."

" I don't understand." She looked at him with a puzzled frown.

" You will in good time." It seemed to her his voice was just a little weary. " Just now it is better that you shouldn't. Do you trust me enough to do that, Sybil ? "

" I trust you absolutely," and she saw him wince.

" Then keep him here till I come back."

" Are you going away, Archie ? " Impulsively she laid her hand on his arm.

" To-morrow, first thing. I shall come back as soon as possible."

For a moment or two they stood in silence, then, with a gesture strangely foreign to one so typically British, he raised her hand to his lips. And the next instant she was alone.

A little later she saw him talking earnestly to her brother in a corner ; then someone suggested billiard-fives. An admirable game, but not one in which it is wise to place one's hand on the edge of the table with the fingers over the cushion. Especially if the owner of the hand is not paying attention to the game. It was Morrison's hand, and the agony of being hit on the fingers by a full-sized billiard ball travelling fast must be experienced to be believed. Of course it was an accident : Longworth was most apologetic. But in the middle of the hideous scene that followed she caught his lazy blue eye and beat a hasty retreat to the hall. Unrestrained mirth in such circumstances is not regarded as the essence of tact.

III.

IT was about ten o'clock on the morning of the next day but one that a sharp-looking, flashily-dressed individual presented himself at the door of Messrs. Gross and Sons. He was of the type that may be seen by the score any day of the week propping up the West-end bars and discoursing on racing form in a hoarse whisper.

" Mornin'," he remarked. " Mr. Johnson here yet ? "

" What do you want to see him about ? " demanded the assistant.

" To tell him that your hair wants cutting," snapped the other. " Hop along, young fellah ; as an ornament you're a misfit.

Tell Mr. Johnson that I've a message from Mr. Morrison."

The youth faded away, to return in a minute or two with a request that the visitor would follow him.

"Message from Morrison? What's up?" Mr. Johnson rose from his chair as the door closed behind the assistant.

The flashy individual laughed and pulled out his cigarette-case.

"He's pulled it off," he chuckled. "At the present moment our one and only Joe is clasping the beauteous girl to his bosom."

"Strike me pink—he hasn't, has he?" Mr. Johnson slapped his leg resoundingly and shook with merriment.

"That's why I've come round," continued the other. "From Smith, I am. Joe wants to give her a little present on account." He grinned again, and felt in his pocket. "Here it is—and he wants a receipt signed by you—acknowledging the return of the necklace which was sent out—on approval." He winked heavily. "He's infernally deep, is Joe." He watched the other man as he picked up the pearls, and for a moment his blue eyes seemed a little strained. "He wants to give that receipt to the girl—so as to clinch the bargain."

"Why the dickens didn't he 'phone me direct?" demanded Johnson, and once again the other grinned broadly.

"Strewth!" he said, "I laughed fit to burst this morning. The 'phone at his girl's place is in the hall, as far as I could make out, and Joe was whispering down it like an old woman with lumbago. 'Take 'em round to Johnson,' he said. 'Approval—approval—you fool.' And then he turned away and I heard him say—'Good-morning, Lady Jemima.' Then back he turns and starts whispering again. 'Do you get me, Bob?' 'Yes,' I says, 'I get you. You want me to take round the pearls to Johnson and get a receipt from him. And what about the other thing—you know, the money the young boob borrowed?' 'Put it in an envelope and send it to me here, with the receipt,' he says. 'I'm going out walking this morning.' Then he rings off, and that's that. Lord! think of Joe walking."

The grin developed into a cackling laugh, in which Mr. Johnson joined.

"He's deep—you're right," he said, admiringly. "Uncommonly deep. I never thought he'd pull it off. Though personally, mark you, I think he's a fool. They'll fight like cat and dog." He rang a bell on his desk, then opening a drawer he dropped the necklace inside. "Bring me a formal receipt form," he said to the assistant. "Have you got the other paper?" he asked, as he affixed the firm's signature to the receipt, and the flashy individual produced it from his pocket.

"Here it is," he announced. "Put 'em both in an envelope together and address it to Joe. I'm going along; I'll post it."

"Will you have a small tiddley before you go?" Mr. Johnson opened a formidable-looking safe, disclosing all the necessary-looking ingredients for the manufacture of small tiddleys.

"I don't mind if I do," conceded the other. "Here's the best—and to the future Mrs. Joe."

A moment or two later he passed through the outer office and was swallowed up in the crowd. And it was not till after lunch that day that Mr. Johnson got the shock of his life—when he opened one of the early evening papers.

"DARING ROBBERY IN WELL-KNOWN CITY FIRM.

"*A most daring outrage was carried out last night at the office of Messrs. Smith and Co., the well-known financial and insurance brokers. At a late hour this morning, some time after work was commenced, the night watchman was discovered bound and securely gagged in a room at the top of the premises. Further investigation revealed that the safe had been opened—evidently by a master hand—and the contents rifled. The extent of the loss is at present unknown, but the police are believed to possess several clues.*"

And at the same time that Mr. Johnson was staring with a glassy stare at this astounding piece of news, a tall, spare man with lazy blue eyes, stretched out comfortably in the corner of a first-class carriage, was also perusing it.

"Several clues," he murmured. "I wonder! But it was a very creditable job, though I say it myself."

Which seemed a strange soliloquy for a well-dressed man in a first-class carriage. And what might have seemed almost stranger, had there been any way of knowing such a recondite fact, was that in one of the mail bags reposing in the back of the train, a mysterious transformation had taken place. For a letter which had originally contained two documents and had been addressed to J. Morrison, Esq., now contained three and was consigned to Miss Sybil Daventry. Which merely goes to show how careful one should be over posting letters.

IV.

"GOOD evening, Mr. Morrison. All well, and taking nourishment, so to speak?"

Archie Longworth lounged into the hall, almost colliding with the other man.

"You look pensive," he continued, staring

at him blandly. "*Agitato, fortissimo.* Has aught occurred to disturb your masterly composure?"

But Mr. Morrison was in no mood for fooling: a message he had just received over the telephone had very considerably disturbed his composure.

"Let me have a look at that paper," he snapped, making a grab at it.

"Tush! Tush!" murmured Archie. "Manners, laddie, manners! You've forgotten that little word."

And then at the far end of the hall he saw the girl, and caught his breath. For the last two days he had almost forgotten her in the stress of other things; now the bitterness of what had to come rose suddenly in his throat and choked him.

"There is the paper. Run away and play in a corner."

Then he went forward to meet her with his usual lazy smile.

"What's happened?" she cried, a little breathlessly.

"Heaps of things," he said, gently. "Heaps of things. The principal one being that a very worthless sinner loves a very beautiful girl—as he never believed it could be given to man to love." His voice broke and faltered: then he went on steadily. "And the next one—which is really even more important—is that the very beautiful girl will receive a letter in a long envelope by to-night's mail. The address will be typed, the postmark Strand. I do not want the beautiful girl to open it except in my presence. You understand?"

"I understand," she whispered, and her eyes were shining.

"Have you seen this?" Morrison's voice—shaking with rage—made Longworth swing round.

"Seen what, dear lad?" he murmured, taking the paper. "Robbery in City—is that what you mean? Dear, dear—what dastardly outrages do go unpunished these days. Messrs. Smith and Co. Really. Watchman bound and gagged. Safe rifled. Work of a master hand. Still, though I quite understand your horror as a law-abiding citizen at such a thing, why this thusness? I mean—altruism is wonderful, laddie; but it seems to me that it's jolly old Smith and Co. who are up the pole."

He burbled on genially, serenely unconscious of the furious face of the other man.

"I'm trying to think where I've met you before, Mr. Longworth," snarled Morrison.

"Never, surely," murmured the other. "Those classic features, I feel sure, would have been indelibly printed on my mind. Perhaps in some mission, Mr. Morrison—some evangelical revival meeting. Who knows? And there, if I mistake not, is the mail."

HE glanced at the girl, and she was staring at him wonderingly. Just for one moment did he show her what she wanted to know—just for one moment did she give him back the answer which was to him the sweetest and at the same time the most bitter in the world. Then he crossed the hall and picked up the letters.

"A business one for you, Miss Daventry," he murmured, mildly. "Better open it at once, and get our business expert's advice. Mr. Morrison is a wonderful fellah for advice."

With trembling fingers she opened the envelope, and, as he saw the contents, Morrison, with a snarl of ungovernable fury, made as if to snatch them out of her hand. The next moment he felt as if his arm was broken, and the blue eyes boring into his brain were no longer lazy.

"You forgot yourself, Mr. Morrison," said Archie Longworth, gently. "Don't do that again."

"But I don't understand," cried the girl, bewildered. "What are these papers?"

"May I see?" Longworth held out his hand, and she gave them to him at once.

"They're stolen." Morrison's face was livid. "Give them to me, curse you."

"Control yourself, you horrible blighter," said Longworth, icily. "This," he continued, calmly, "would appear to be a receipt from Messrs. Gross and Sons for the return of a pearl necklace—sent out to Mr. Daventry on approval."

"But you said he'd bought it and pawned it." She turned furiously on Morrison.

"So he did," snarled that gentleman. "That's a forgery."

"Is it?" said Longworth. "That strikes me as being Johnson's signature. Firm's official paper. And—er—he has the necklace, I—er—assume."

"Yes—he has the necklace. Stolen last night by—by——" His eyes were fixed venomously on Longworth.

"Go on," murmured the other. "You're being most entertaining."

But a sudden change had come over Morrison's face—a dawning recognition. "By God!" he muttered, "you're—you're——"

"Yes. I'm—who? It'll come in time, laddie—if you give it a chance. And in the meantime we might examine these other papers. Now, this appears to my inexperienced eye to be a transaction entered into on the one part by Messrs. Smith and Co. and on the other by William Daventry. And it concerns filthy lucre. Dear, dear. Twenty-five per cent. per month. Three hundred per cent. Positive usury, Mr.

Morrison. Don't you agree with me? A rapacious bloodsucker is Mr. Smith."

But the other man was not listening: full recollection had come to him, and with a cold look of triumph he put his hands into his pockets and laughed.

"Very pretty," he remarked. "Very pretty indeed. And how, in your vernacular, do you propose to get away with the swag, Mr. Flash Pete? I rather think the police—whom I propose to call up on the 'phone in one minute—will be delighted to see such an old and elusive friend."

He glanced at the girl, and laughed again at the look on her face.

"What's he mean, Archie?" she cried, wildly. "What's he mean?"

"I mean," Morrison sneered, "that Mr. Archie Longworth is what is generally described as a swell crook with a reputation in certain unsavoury circles extending over two or three continents. And the police, whom I now propose to ring up, will welcome him as a long-lost child."

He walked towards the telephone, and with a little gasp of fear the girl turned to Archie.

"Say it's not true, dear—say it's not true."

For a moment he looked at her with a whimsical smile; then he sat down on the high fender round the open fire.

"I think, Mr. Morrison," he murmured, gently, "that if I were you I would not be too precipitate over ringing up the police. The engaging warrior who sent this letter to Miss Daventry put in yet one more enclosure."

Morrison turned round: then he stood very still.

"A most peculiar document," continued the man by the fire, in the same gentle voice, "which proves very conclusively that amongst their other activities Messrs. Smith and Co. are not only the receivers of stolen goods, but are mixed up with illicit diamond buying."

IN dead silence the two men stared at one another; then Longworth spoke again.

"I shall keep these three documents, Mr. Morrison, as a safeguard for your future good behaviour. Mr. Daventry can pay a certain fair sum or not as he likes—that is his business: and I shall make a point of explaining exactly to him who and what you are—and Smith—and Gross. But should you be disposed to make any trouble over the necklace—or should the idea get abroad that Flash Pete was responsible for the burglary last night—it will be most unfortunate for you—most. This document would interest Scotland Yard immensely."

Morrison's face had grown more and more livid as he listened, and when the quiet voice ceased, unmindful of the girl standing by, he began to curse foully and hideously. The next moment he cowered back, as two iron hands gripped his shoulders and shook him till his teeth rattled.

"Stop, you filthy swine," snarled Longworth, "or I'll break every bone in your body. Quite a number of men are blackguards, Morrison—but you're a particularly creeping and repugnant specimen. Now—get out—and do it quickly. The nine-thirty will do you nicely. And don't forget what I've just said: because, as there's a God above, I mean it."

"I'll be even with you for this some day, Flash Pete," said the other venomously over his shoulder. "And then——"

"And then," said Longworth, contemptuously, "we will resume this discussion. Just now—get out."

V.

"YES: it is quite true." She had known it was—and yet, womanlike, she had clung to the hope that there was some mistake—some explanation. And now, alone with the man she had grown to love, the faint hope died. With his lazy smile, he stared down at her—a smile so full of sorrow and pain that she could not bear to see it.

"I'm Flash Pete—with an unsavoury reputation, as our friend so kindly told you, in three continents. It was I who broke open the safe at Smith's last night, I who got the receipt from Gross. You see, I spotted the whole trick from the beginning; as I said, I had inside information. And Morrison is Smith and Co.; moreover, he's very largely Gross as well—and half-a-dozen other rotten things in addition. The whole thing was worked with one end in view right from the beginning: the girl your brother originally bought the pearls for was in it; it was she who suggested the pawning. Bill told me that the night before last." He sighed and paced two or three times up and down the dim-lit conservatory. And after a while he stopped in front of her again, and his blue eyes were very tender.

"Just a common sneak-thief—just a common worthless sinner. And he's very, very glad that he has been privileged to help the most beautiful girl in all the world. Don't cry, my dear, don't cry: there's nothing about that sinner that's worth a single tear of yours. You must forget his wild presumption in falling in love with that beautiful girl: his only excuse is that he couldn't help it. And maybe, in the days to come, the girl will think kindly every now and then of a man known to some as Archie Longworth—known to others as Flash Pete—known to himself as—well, we won't bother about that."

He bent quickly and raised her hand to his

"He walked towards the telephone, and with a little gasp of fear the girl turned to Archie. 'Say it's not true, dear —say it's not true.'"

lips; then he was gone almost before she had realized it. And if he heard her little gasping cry—"Archie, my man, come back—I love you so," he gave no sign.

For in his own peculiar code a very worthless sinner must remain a very worthless sinner to the end—and he must run the course alone.

"Jean stopped short at Mark's picture and

"On the Line"

MARK ROBERTS, who had not been into the Academy for six years before, visited it nearly every day in 1920. At the same time it was noticed by his friends—amused, surprised, or cynical, according to their characters and their friendship—that what had formerly been a museum of artistic incapacity, "the mummy-case of painting," even the lethal chamber of strayed ideals, had suddenly become respectable. "The Academy," said Mark, "is waking up at last."

Mark was too honest to hide his discovery because it might cause derision. He saw the smiles of his less polite or more egotistical acquaintance, and replied only, "I don't say so because I've got a picture there this year. It's because I really think so." This was quite true. He did think so.

looked at it for at least three minutes."

AN ACADEMY STORY.

by T. JOYCE *Illustrated by WILMOT LUNT*

Nevertheless he had a great distaste for all the pictures which happened to hang on the same wall with his own. As he plaintively declared, there could not be worse neighbours—gaudy, flashy canvases which overwhelmed the subtleties of his own delicate nocturne. No artist—not the poet, the actor, the writer—can have just that pleasure enjoyed by a painter when he sees a stranger stand before his picture in a public gallery. It is, of course, pleasant to find someone reading one's book in the train—delightful to see him grin, frown, or glare; more delightful of all to watch an impressionable young City lady sniff and rub her beautiful nose to redness over the terrible sufferings of your heroine, especially as you know, and she knows, that it must be all put right for her in the last page—but even this rare entertainment is not comparable

with the breathless interest of a young painter who gazes sidelong upon the critic of the gallery, either male or female. What is her taste? Does the man in the tall hat look like a dealer? Or that other in the black sombrero seem like a foreign collector? Will he look for the number in the catalogue first (most important point this) or last—that is to say, is he merely *doing* the pictures, or is he a true lover of art, compelled by the beauty of this work to find out its name and its artist?

Will he pass, or will he stop?

What a moment when the gazer hesitates, as on one toe, and with his chin over his shoulder!

Mark had many such moments, and on the whole suffered rather more disappointments than joys—the poised hesitator too often came down decisively upon his heel, and marched on.

BUT he was for that reason all the more delighted one afternoon when he recognized Jean South in the room, and Jean, passing briskly along the wall, covered with the meretricious and glaring works of his slap-dash rivals, stopped short at his own picture, and looked at it for at least three minutes.

This, he reflected with exultation, was the young woman who had ranked the painter lower than the lawyer, the doctor, even than the tradesman. "Grocers are absolutely necessary," said Jean (who knew little of Bolshevist principles of distribution), "but artists aren't—not *absolutely*." They had quarrelled very bitterly on so fundamental a point of difference.

Even now Mark would not accost Jean, and took every precaution to avoid her. He lurked in a neighbouring group like a detective, and peered at her across the pepper-and-salt shoulder of a gentleman from the country, who was making a little speech to friends of the same complexion, three ladies in tweed coats and skirts, of somewhat horsey cut, and a small boy and girl, about the proper drawing of a sheep.

"Their legs come out right back——" he declared.

Jean South meanwhile scrutinized Mark's canvas with her face not three inches from the glass—after the fashion of the first critics, who begin by studying the brushwork—then retired a step with her head on the left shoulder—cocked her chin up, and retreated another step—tried looking sideways, decided that the nearer distance was better, and advanced again for a last prolonged gaze of rapture, which fully confirmed Mark's. He was even able, by using the country gentleman's party for cover, when they marched forward in a solid group to confirm their critic's statement that the legs of the sheep in the picture came out of their necks, to see Jean's profile, and to detect there the true, unmistakable smile of admiration.

Jean at last turned away, so suddenly that she nearly caught him. She passed, still smiling, and walked out of the room as quickly as she had entered.

Roberts was a trifle ashamed. He had had to duck his head very quickly to escape Jean's eye, and this was humiliating. It proved to him that he had been behaving in an undignified manner, unworthy in one who had forsworn all interests but art, and especially Jean South. No artist can allow himself to care for a woman who says to him: "You are a lazy ruffian, and I'd rather marry a chimney-sweep. Chimney-sweeping is at least *work*."

True, Jean had not used these exact words. She was far too kind. These were the words which Mark preferred to put into her mouth, because he was really in love, and therefore desired, very naturally, to blacken her character. It is necessary for a lover to be able to think very badly of a young woman who refuses to allow herself to be loved, or even engaged. Jean had actually said: "I'm very, very sorry, Mark dear, but I can't feel that you are quite serious about painting. You've tried so many things before. I know you have stuck to it for three years now, but you were more than that in your father's business before, weren't you? And you gave that up in the end. You see, I do think people ought to find out some work they want to do, and stick to it."

"And painting isn't work," Mark had put in. "And you can't respect me as a painter. That's why you won't marry me."

"Now, Mark, did I say that? And I think you'll admit that painting is not—it's not exactly—I mean, of course, a man could work hard at painting, but it's so easy not to. Doctors and lawyers must do their work, but an artist——"

After this Mark had grown very warm, and Jean a trifle more plain than she had intended. The interview ended in something not far removed from mutual abuse—certainly in a breach of friendship.

But as anyone can see, Mark's translation of Jean's words, even if rather summary, was not unjust. She had not called him a lazy brute, inferior to a chimney-sweep, but any young man in his position—that is to say, in love with her—could see that she meant it.

As Mark strolled into the next room, merely to be sure that Jean had not lingered there, he recollected with some faint regret that he had always endeavoured to impress upon Jean, as a declared Philistine, that the

Academy was a limbo, an exploded relic of the Dark Ages, a moribund institution for the support of the Old Men—a picture-shop for the provinces—who had never got farther in their artistic ideals than the oleo-lithograph. These apophthegms were all very well from one student to another, but he reflected that it was a little unfortunate he had dinned them so often into Jean's ears. Perhaps he had been led into the indiscretion by Jean's apparent belief that an artist who failed to get his pictures into the Academy (as Mark had three times failed) failed only because his work was not good enough for the selection committee. He had been obliged to use his strongest arguments against this old and deep prejudice. It was only after much and vigorous rhetoric that he had proved to her that the Academy refused the larger part of pictures offered to its consideration because they were too good—too modern and progressive—for its hide-bound standards.

But now that his own picture was on the line, he was sorry that he had been so persuasive. Success of this kind, no doubt, counted for little with himself, or with artists of the same sincerity, but it might count with poor Jean in her twilight of conservatism.

Jean was not in the next room, nor the next, nor the one after that. Mark, after walking through all the galleries, was astonished by her flight. She must have gone quickly indeed, or away altogether, for him to miss her.

HE felt a sudden desire for the open air. The Academy crowd ceased to amuse, and became nothing more than a miscellaneous collection of dull and undistinguished-looking people. He made for the exit, turning aside only to peep down the wall of the gallery where hung the nocturne. Someone might be looking at it—possibly even a crowd. In two papers of the day before there had been a notice of it which might well attract a crowd. But only one figure stood before its glories of blue, dark-blue, silver-grey, and orange. In fact, there she was again—Jean South, cocking her head and balancing her plump trimness before the frame, like a lively sparrow.

Roberts walked down the gallery, and presented himself.

"What, you here!——" she smiled with frank delight, as she offered her hand.

"It is a funny place to find me in——" he said, with a glance at the picture.

"I thought you despised the Academy?" she said, not without a careful gravity.

"Are you having tea?" He changed the subject.

"I expect we'll go home for tea. Mother is going to pick me up at Piccadilly Circus, at four. I was just going along——"

"I was going along that way too—to the Tube."

Jean smiled as they walked towards the door.

"Not with me," she said at last.

"Oh, yes—that is—I was going to the Tube——"

"How clumsy you are, Mark! You always tell the truth."

"But I'd go now, even if I wasn't wanting the Tube," said Mark, "and that's true, too. I oughtn't to tell you either, because I didn't mean to pay you any more compliments."

"Still, that makes it all the nicer," said Jean, receiving her sunshade from the warder by the door, who released that numbered convict with a kind of reluctance, as if he regretted the loss of its cheerful though dangerous company. Or perhaps he was wondering if Jean would give him anything. Women seldom do understand that where tips are not allowed they are doubly welcome—that the rule of no gratuities is an opportunity for the truly beneficent and a test of generosity. Jean, however, had threepence ready in her hand—indeed, quite warm. She presented it with a smile worth quite another threepence (accompanied as it was by hard copper), even to the turnkey of sticks, hats, and umbrellas.

"What do you think of the pictures?" asked Mark in a friendly manner, when they reached the courtyard.

"I don't know." Jean, remembering his precepts, was cautious. She hesitated, and frowned slightly, as if in the difficulty of expressing her complicated thoughts. "What did you think of them?" she ventured at last.

"Some of the stuff isn't bad—they're getting some new blood now, you know."

"Yes—some of them I liked," Jean admitted. "But then," she smiled at him, "I'm not much of a critic, am I?"

"I shouldn't say that, Jean," replied Mark, thoughtfully. "Natural taste is often the best taste. You are keen on music, you have an excellent eye for colour——"

"Oh!"

"I judge by your frocks."

"Oh!" Jean laughed. But she was delighted with Mark.

"You *must* have good taste," continued Mark, earnestly, "only you don't happen to have looked at pictures—not really *looked* at them."

"And you think if I really look, I'll be able to understand the difference?"

"I'm sure of it." He met Jean's eye.

Jean was curious, mocking, a little sad. She was, indeed, wondering what Mark was thinking of her—how much he had been thinking of her—why he had never attempted to be reconciled with her. She was, in short, preoccupied with affairs which may or may not be more important than art, but will always be more interesting to young women. "I'm *sure* your taste only requires practice," said Mark again.

"Very well, Mark," said Jean, "you must get a picture into the Academy. And then I'll look my very best."

Mark was astonished, and then so pleased that he coloured. It was beyond all his hopes that Jean should have singled out his picture in ignorance of its painter.

"I did send," he replied, with immense solemnity.

"Oh, Mark!" cried Jean, with her most sympathetic look. "What a shame! But, of course, as you say, they *are* frightfully jealous. They *do* refuse some of the best things. Still, after you have tried so often": she touched his arm. "Really, Mark, dear, I think it's hateful of them to be so mean."

Mark could not hide his elation. He grinned, while he blurted out: "But, Jean, they accepted me this time."

He could have danced on the pavement when he thought of the revelation still to come.

Jean actually did give a kind of skip. "Why, Mark, how ab-so-lute-ly splendid!" she cried. "It's—it's—I can't say how glad I am. Let's go back and see it. I *must* see it." Jean was rosy with excitement. "Why, Mark, you really are a *great* artist now."

Mark deprecated this enthusiasm. He was bound to do so. No one can allow himself to be praised at this rate without deprecation if he wants to be respected by his flatterers, or, indeed, if he wants more flattery. He pursed up his lips, twirled his stick, slapped his leg with his gloves, and replied that there was no time to go back that afternoon—that the picture was not really much good, not as good as he could do—finally, with a smile, that a single picture in the Academy does not make a great artist.

THEY passed under the archway into the eddying crowds of Piccadilly. Mark had just decided upon the best use of his extraordinary opportunity. He was, indeed, skilful in extracting fine moments out of life, and exercised his skill with quite as much artistry as he put into his pictures. He would bring Jean to the Academy, lead her to the picture which she had already picked out of the whole roomful, and say: "There, that is mine. What do you think of it?" This, he thought, would give him, and Jean, a more delicious moment of appreciation than any mere discovery, by words, in the street.

Jean, meanwhile, was not at all subdued by Mark's calm demeanour in success. She trotted along the pavement in great excitement, talking to Mark as fast as her lively imagination suggested new developments of her main premiss, and continually bumping into the passers-by. The premiss, in which nothing could shake her, was that a man who had a picture in the Academy was not only an established artist, but on the high road of fortune.

Jean at last talked herself breathless, and ran so heavily into a very large fat man that she nearly fell down.

"Oh!" cried Jean.

"My dear!" said Mark, seeing her anguished expression. "Are you hurt?"

"My hat," Jean ejaculated, "and my hair!"

"They look all right." Mark was relieved.

"I sha'n't be happy about them until I can *see*," said Jean, not at all relieved and peering into the window of Swan and Edgar's. "I do wish they had a mourning window here."

"But you have a glass in the car, and you said your mother was coming——"

"Can you see her? We were to meet in the middle by the fountain," said Jean, anxiously.

Mark could not see Mrs. South or her car, because there were three buses between him and the fountain.

"You know, Mark," said Jean, while they waited, "that's another thing about the Academy. Now you are a member——"

"But I'm *not* a member, Jean, dear——"

"Well, then, now that they want you to be a member——"

Mark opened his mouth to offer another protest, but Jean interrupted him with an imperious gesture. "You ought," she said, "to make them put up a few looking-glasses in the place. I don't know how it is—but I always get untidy when I go to a picture gallery or a museum."

"Bohemian influence — or scholastic," suggested Mark; "it shows your temperament to be very sympathetic."

"Nonsense, Mark!" she smiled, fondly. "Do you know I went all through two whole rooms for something to see myself in—and there was only one picture dark enough for a looking-glass. But I don't think one ought to be thrown back on a bad picture to know if one hasn't a smut on one's nose."

"A bad picture," faltered Mark, with a terrible sensation as if his heart had fallen into the tea-less abyss of his stomach.

"I didn't really look at the picture," Jean admitted, "but it seemed just a slab of blackness. Perhaps it was the portrait of

"She darted impulsively across the road; Mark was cut off by a bus."

a boot-hole. Why, there's the car. I *must* tell mother——"

She darted impulsively across the road to Mercury's island; Mark was fortunately cut off by a bus. Thus he arrived some moments later to receive Jean's apologies for the sudden desertion with a perfectly composed countenance.

Mrs. South was standing beside her, and greeted the young man with unusual warmth. She had already heard from Jean, who stood beside her in a glow of pride, of Mark's astonishing triumph. She congratulated the young man, with her most kindly smile, upon his *latest* success. Latest success: this was a phrase worthy of that wise and adroit lady. It seemed to confer upon him, in two words, a long past of glory. It ennobled his present elevation, as it were, after the Chinese fashion, by giving it a pedigree.

But Mark was not greatly charmed by her tact, and thanked her without effusiveness. He was indeed a trifle distant, lofty, and grim.

Mrs. South had some pricks of conscience. She had perhaps been unfair to Mr. Roberts in hinting to Jean the advisability of waiting for some plain evidence of his ability to paint, and go on painting, before she thought of an engagement. Worse than this, Mr. Roberts might guess that she had given such hints. She pressed him, in her warmest manner of invitation, to come back with them to tea.

"Oh, do!" cried Jean. "We haven't seen you for ages and ages and *ages*. And we want to hear all about your picture."

"You've seen my picture," said Mark, with an air of dignity.

"Me!—no——"

"The portrait of the boot-hole, you know—that was my picture. A nocturne——"

Jean was overwhelmed. She coloured so deeply, she gazed at Mark with such obvious horror and despair that her mother at once perceived a catastrophe.

"You mustn't mind Jean's opinions of pictures," she said, pleasantly, "for she knows nothing about them. But I'm quite sure she will like *yours*."

"Oh, Mark!" cried Jean, taking him by the sleeve, "I am a—— But if you don't come home to tea I'll never forgive myself."

Mrs. South thought it wise to turn to the car. Mark, the most polite of men, did not assist her. She got in alone, and waited patiently during three long minutes, though she smiled out of the opposite window at the no doubt amusing architecture of the far side of Piccadilly with probably as much pleasure as it has ever given to anybody.

"So you're coming with us—that's nice," she said to Mark, when at last the pair climbed in. Mark, with some embarrassment, seemed to admit that it was, on the whole, nice enough.

It was not till some time later that he understood the full profits of remorse in the female mind, nor for an even longer period that it does not matter in the least to an artist what his wife thinks of his pictures. Because, whatever she thinks, she will always say that every one of them is better, much, *much* better, than the last.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 94.

ONE of a group, from Hants not far away:
Part of a Duchy famous in its day.

1. 'Tis not a laugh, nor yet is it a smile,
Appearing oft on faces imbecile.
2. Exists in legend and heraldic art,
But you must amputate the naval part.
3. How long a time! In fact, it has no bound;
Its symbol is a figure truly round.
4. The country and the people form this thing,
All governed by a noble, gracious king.
5. Network of nerves is found in insect class
Whose fragile wings resemble thinnest glass.
6. The minister for this light quotes his text,
Discussing themes of this life and the next.
7. Though Pliny praised its varied tints of green,
In flawless beauty it is rarely seen.
8. 'Twas here a few hours since, before the stroke
Of midnight sounding bell the echoes woke.

PETER PORT.

ANSWER TO No. 93.

1.	M	adeir	A
2.	A	ntwer	P
3.	R	olle	R
4.	C	apr	I
5.	H	ai	L
6.	W	arminste	R
7.	I	nsomni	A
8.	N	eeess	I
9.	D	oze	N
10.	S	hilling	S

NOTE.—Light 8. Necessity.

Answers to Acrostic No. 94 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on May 10th.

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

Some of the lights of No. 91 are answered equally well by other words, and several alternatives have been accepted for the third, fifth, seventh, ninth, and twelfth.

The Humorous Art of "Fougasse"

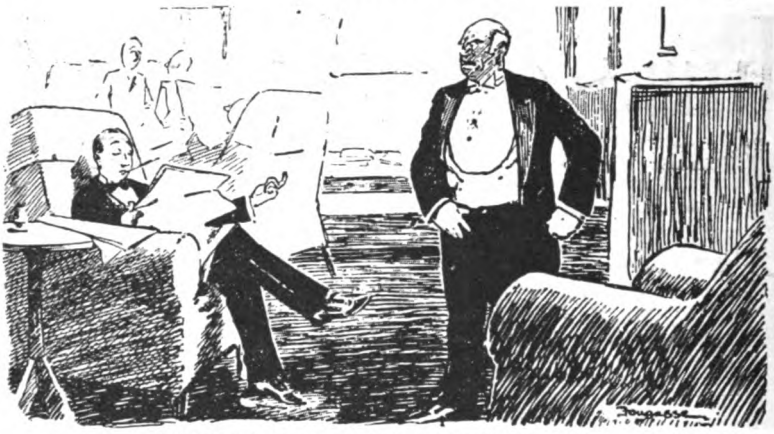
AN enigma is always intriguing, and when it concerns merit as well as mystery curiosity soon reaches a high pitch. Nobody who takes the smallest interest in contemporary humorous art, whether in the pages of genial "Mr. Punch" or elsewhere, can have failed during the last few years to note the amusing drawings which bear the cryptic signature of "Fougasse." "Who is 'Fougasse'?" is an inquiry one continually hears from all and sundry: followed almost invariably by the further query, "Is he a Frenchman?" The second question is not perhaps unnatural, though a moment's reflection should surely make it plain that only by some very rare chance could a Frenchman acquire so peculiarly English a standpoint as the drawings of "Fougasse" reveal. Moreover, there is nothing the least bit Gallic in the artist's technique.

It was a conviction, for these reasons, that the mysterious signature must be a *nom-de-plume* which led the present writer to seek enlightenment from a French dictionary. There he found the helpful information that the French word *fougade* (fem. *fougasse*) is a military term meaning a fougasse. It was not until recourse was had to the "sole concessionnaire" of the word, as one might almost term him, that an explanation was forthcoming.

Mr. Kenneth Bird, A.K.C., B.Sc., A.M.Inst.C.E., is (or rather was) a civil engineer by profession—a fact which has a certain

This is not a domestic difference—it is only adjacent boxes in a public call-office in process of being switched on to the wrong numbers.

By permission of "The Sketch."



"Waiter, bring me a whisky-and-soda, please."
"I'm not a waiter, confound you!"
"Oh, right-o—then don't trouble."

Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

bearing on the "Fougasse" mystery. One uses the past tense because misadventure in Gallipoli during the ill-fated campaign of 1915 placed a definite and viciously indited full-stop to a career in which the drawing of funny pictures would never, probably, have played any very prominent part.

Kenneth Bird was educated at Cheltenham College, and like many Cheltonians was originally intended for the Army. But a bent for engineering, and a preference for the civil rather than the military aspect of it, sent him to King's College, London. There he became president of the Engineering Society, and incidentally president of the London University Union. After leaving King's College he had a short experience of prospecting in Spain, and the outbreak of war in 1914 found him at Rosyth, where he was engaged in the constructional work of H.M. Dockyard. Receiving a commission in the Royal Engineers, he was attached after training to the 9th Division, and subsequently went out to Gallipoli, where he was with the 52nd Division. At the end of 1915 an unmistakable "Blighty one" sent him home to lie on his back for the next three years, with participation in the war strictly limited to reading about it in the papers.

New Hand "Flies seem pretty awful out here, corporal."
Hardened Campaigner: "Wot flies?"

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Portrait of a gentleman in process of deciding that the hire of a car to take him to his fancy-dress revel would have been well worth the expense.

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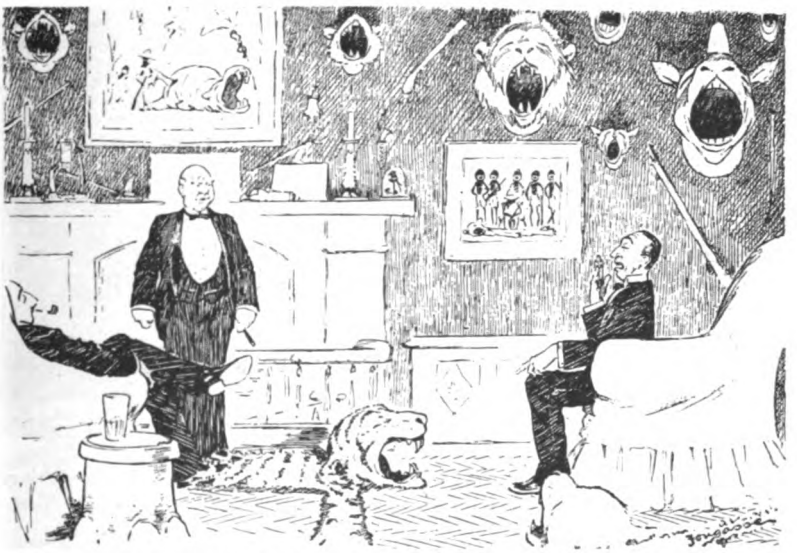
Faced by the certainty of being unable ever again to follow his profession as an engineer, and with the probability of having to spend the greater part, if not the whole, of his life in bed, Kenneth Bird proceeded to cast round for some other occupation. He began to indulge a certain talent for whimsical drawing which he had always possessed, and some of his sketches were presently submitted to *Punch* and other papers. Not only were these accepted, but others were invited—not so very surprising when one recalls the felicity with which "Fougasse" hit off the lighter side of warfare and the delicious figures of fun which Fritz and Hans cut in his satirical little pictures.



Host (a Mighty Hunter breaking off in the middle of his longest story): "But I seem to be boring you?"
Guest: "Oh, no. Fact is—all these animals yawning—so beastly infectious."

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The adoption of the *nom-de-plume* "Fougasse" (to return to that interesting topic) is characteristic alike of the artist's modesty and his quietly ironical vein of humour. A fougasse, it appears, is an elementary sort of land-mine or booby-trap, consisting of a hole in the ground with guncotton or other explosive at the bottom and sharp stones on the top. "It is the sort of practical joke that may go off successfully, or may not," explained the artist—"a rough-and-ready sort of affair, in short, which I thought was a not inapt description of the kind of work I expected to turn out. That's all there is to it." Gossips and others who so diligently report that "Fougasse" is an importation from France, brought over because our English humorists are not funny enough, please note!

It is less than four years since the first "Fougasse" drawings appeared, and seldom, if ever, has a humorous artist "made good" with the public in so brief a space of time. The reason is not far to seek, and lies in the quality of his humour. "Fougasse's" ideas are always spontaneous and fresh. How he gets them it is difficult to say, except, negatively, that he makes it a rule never to accept second-hand a joke to illustrate or an idea to elaborate. His happiest efforts have

THE LOST TICKET.

nearly all arisen from things quite casually observed. Of those here reproduced, "Wot Flies?" is obviously a reminiscence of Gallipoli. "Scotland for Ever!" was prompted by the perennial complaint of loyal patriots north of the Tweed. "Beastly Infectious" was derived from the artist's own stay in a house decorated with many trophies of the chase. Going late to bed one night he observed the head of a tiger skin, and was much struck by the completeness with which the expression

Unfortunate oversight on the part of a practitioner called away from his children's party to attend a patient in his consulting-room.

Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

SCOTLAND FOR EVER!

Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

thereon represented his own sentiments at the moment. The study of an elderly medical practitioner called away from a children's party to attend a patient arose out of the engaging spectacle of an eminent doctor giving an erudite disquisition after dinner on Christmas night to two other learned gentlemen, all very solemn, and all attired in paper caps.

Quiet observation, dry comment, and restraint are the salient features of "Fougasse's" humour. His is no ebullient personality, nor does he figuratively slap one on the shoulder after the manner of the merely facetious. On the contrary, there is perhaps a suggestion of the engineer in the care with which his drawings are planned and built up. To this "Fougasse" owes much of his success with the stories told in a sequence of small sketches which he first essayed on the suggestion of the late F. H. Townsend, then Art Editor of *Punch*, and has since so diligently cultivated. Upon foundations well and truly laid, incident is piled on incident, with a nice regard for logical development and cumulative effect, until the inevitable climax brings finality.

Just like all the girls, she knows he's got the goods, and she loves him for it — Cissie's right this time, and you can't blame her for it.

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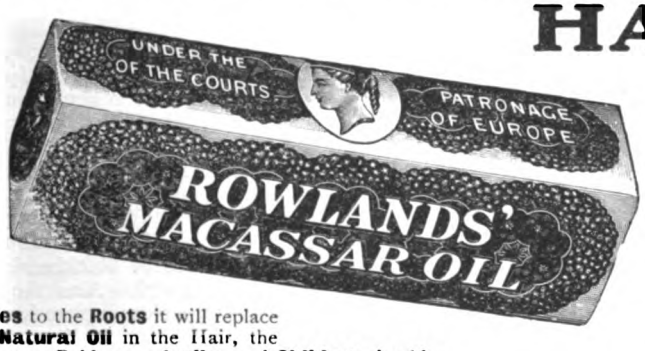

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To face end of Text.

Some Old-Fashioned Beauty Recipes

Simple and Effective

By MIMOSA.

The Magnetism of Beautiful Hair

BEAUTIFUL hair adds immensely to the personal magnetism of both men and women. Actresses and smart women are ever on the look-out for any harmless thing that will increase the natural beauty of their hair. The latest method is to use pure stallax as a shampoo on account of the peculiarly glossy, fluffy, and wavy effect which it leaves. As stallax has never been used much for this purpose it comes to the chemist only in ¼ lb. sealed original packages, enough for twenty-five or thirty shampoos. A teaspoonful of the fragrant stallax granules, dissolved in a cup of hot water, is more than sufficient for each shampoo. It is very beneficial and stimulating to the hair, apart from its beautifying effect.

Permanently Removing Superfluous Hair

HOW to permanently, not merely temporarily, remove a downy growth of disfiguring superfluous hair, is what many women wish to know. It is a pity that it is not more generally known that pure powdered pheminol, obtainable from the chemist's, may be used for this purpose. It is applied directly to the objectionable hair. The recommended treatment not only instantly removes the hair, leaving no trace, but is designed also to kill the roots completely.

The Curling Iron

DON'T use a hot iron to curl your hair. Some of my friends make the cunningest sort of curl wherever they want them simply by dampening the hair with liquid silmerine before retiring at night. When the hair is dry in the morning it will be softly curly just where you want it to be. This method is perfectly harmless, even beneficial to the hair, and the curls last a long time. The liquid is quite pleasant, and neither sticky nor greasy.

Home-Made Hair Tonic

MY acquaintances say that a good stimulant to the natural growth of the hair is a very simple, effective and safe stimulating lotion made up by mixing one ounce of boranium with ¼ pint of bay rum. This may be applied to the hair roots occasionally with the finger tips with good results.

To Have Smooth, White Skin, Free From Blemish

DOES your skin chap or roughen easily, or become unduly red or blotchy? Let me tell you a quick and easy way to overcome the trouble and keep your complexion beautifully white, smooth, and soft. Just get some ordinary mercolized wax at the chemist's, and use a little before retiring as you would use cold cream. The wax, through some peculiar action, flecks off the rough, discoloured, or blemished skin. The worn-out cuticle comes off just like dandruff on a diseased scalp, only in almost invisible particles. Mercolized wax simply hastens Nature's work, which is the rational and proper way to obtain a perfect complexion, so much sought after, but very seldom seen. The process is perfectly simple and quite harmless.

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A PRACTICALLY instantaneous remedy for blackheads, greasy skins, and enlarged pores, recently discovered, is now coming into general use in the boudoir. It is very simple, harmless and pleasant. Drop a stymol tablet, obtained at the chemist's, in a tumbler full of hot water. After the effervescence has subsided, bathe the face in the liquid, using a small sponge or soft cloth. In a few minutes dry the face, and the offensive blackheads will come right off on the towel. Also the large oily pores immediately close up and efface themselves naturally. The greasiness disappears and the skin is left smooth, soft and cool. This simple treatment is then repeated a few times at intervals of four or five days to ensure a permanence of the result.

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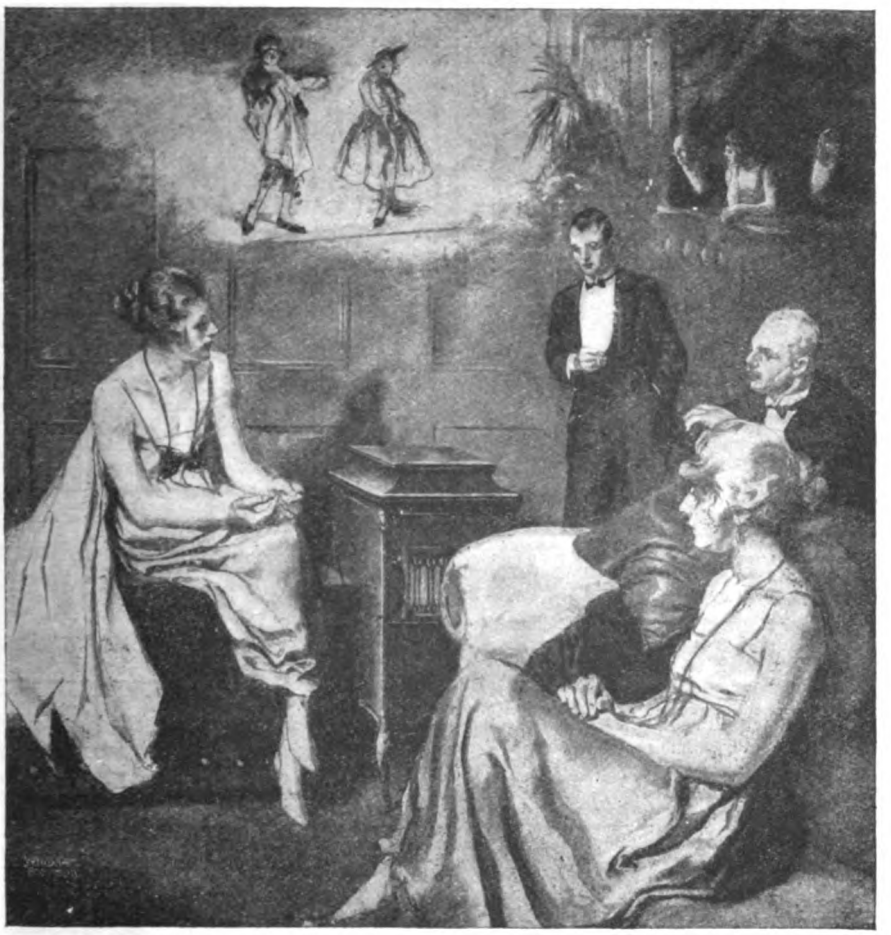

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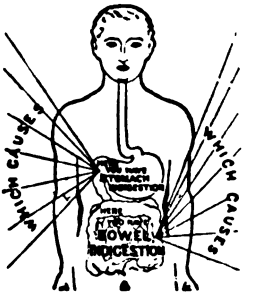

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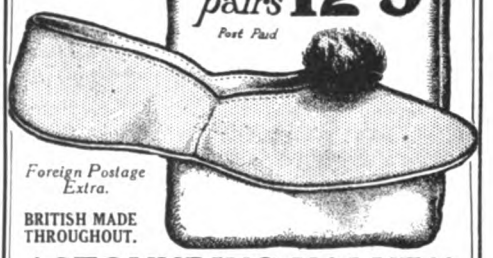

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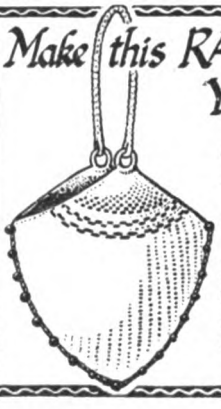
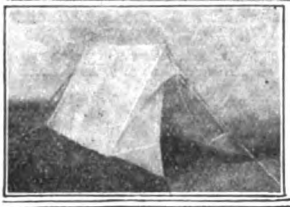


Bag started on frame, instructions, and bright raffia to finish — post free, **3/-**

Price list of materials, etc., things to make in cane and raffia - free from Handicraft Dept. DRYAD WORKS, LEICESTER.



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Finest Botany Serges for Ladies and Gents 13/6 to 18/6 per yd. ; Solid Worsteds in Fancy Designs at Half Price. Ladies' and Gentlemen's Tweeds Cheaper than ever.
As these particular goods will not be advertised again it will pay you to send for **FREE PATTERNS TO-DAY** to—
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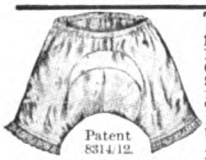

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Gives a delightfully refreshing draught of cool air with a minimum of exertion. Very well made in either imitation Ivory or Tortoiseshell. Exceptional value. Price **6/-** each, post free. Sent in strong box.
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is the greatest drawback in life to any man or woman. If you are nervous, timid, low-spirited, lack self-confidence, will-power, mind concentration, blush, or feel awkward in the presence of others, send **3** penny stamps for particulars of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment. Used in the Navy from Vice-Admiral to Seaman, and in the Army from Colonel to Private, D.S.O.'s, M.C.'s, M.M.'s and D.C.M.'s.
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and sufferers from any form of indigestion should try
"P.R." CURONA Regd. **Biscuits**
Easily digested. Most palatable and nourishing. Cost little more than ordinary biscuits. Of leading London Stores, Health Food Stores, Chemists, etc. Large box, **5·9**; Two Boxes for **11/-**; Sample box, **1/6**, all post free from
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will determine whether an egg be fertile or not, and will indicate the sex of an egg, or any animal, bird, fish, or insect, alive or dead, part or whole. Invaluable to Farmers, Naturalists, Students and Housekeepers. It also provides scientific diversion and endless amusement. Price, with full instructions, post free, **5 -**. Agents wan ed.
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Not only is **Tobacco filthy** and **disgusting** to your loved ones, but it contains a **Deadly Poison** which weakens **heart, stomach, lowers vitality, and invites disease** that may shorten your life. **Stop! Regain Vigour and Vitality, Calm Nerves.** My Free Book tells how you can conquer habit in 3 to 5 days. It makes no difference how long you have used tobacco, whether you smoke cigarettes, pipe, cigars, chew, or use snuff. Write to-day. Ask for FREE BOOK No. 19.
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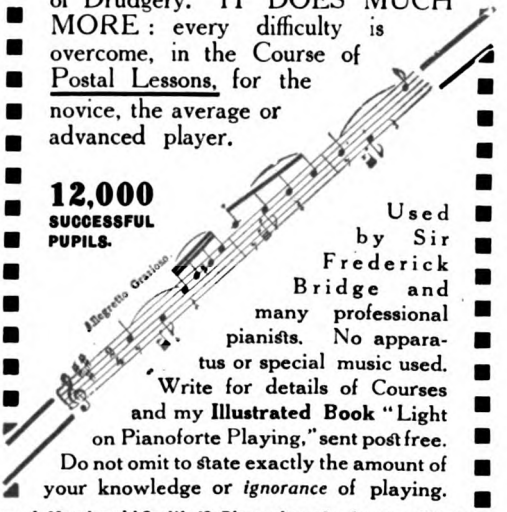
that "FROM BRAIN TO KEYBOARD" teaching has made an end of Drudgery. IT DOES MUCH MORE: every difficulty is overcome, in the Course of Postal Lessons, for the novice, the average or advanced player.



12,000 SUCCESSFUL PUPILS.

Used by Sir Frederick Bridge and many professional pianists. No apparatus or special music used. Write for details of Courses and my **Illustrated Book** "Light on Pianoforte Playing," sent post free. Do not omit to state exactly the amount of your knowledge or *ignorance* of playing.

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From Brain to Keyboard

Macdonald Smith's System of Pianoforte Playing.

FOR PRIVATE HOUSES

75/-

PER SET.

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CLEAN THOSE YOU HAVE.

They will look like New if you

USE CHIVERS' CARPET SOAP

One Tablet is sufficient for a large Carpet.

SOLD AT ALL STORES.

Sample tablet **2d.** *stamp.*

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Sticks at nothing to stick everything. It knows no obstacles to the effective repair of anything broken. When you apply Seccotine you know that you are using the World's best adhesive. It is clean and easy to handle.

From all Ironmongers, Stationers and Stores in tubes **9d.** and in handy pocket-size in boxes at 4½d.

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Money.

"How the money flies," says the housewife. And she is thankful her family can keep well on Kruschen Salts which costs only a third of a penny a day. Enough for two months in a 1/9 bottle

Kruschen Salts

17

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A MARVELLOUS INVENTION.

WRITE TO-DAY FOR FREE BOOKLET

THE MURRAY EAR DRUM

Enclose a stamp for postage to

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SECRETLY AND QUICKLY CONQUERED.

FREE TRIAL

If you desire to rescue your friend from the Drink Craving you can easily do so by using a simple Home Treatment which can be given *secretly* in Tea, Coffee, Whisky, Beer, or other Liquid. It is impossible of detection, being tasteless and *quite harmless. Succeeds where others fail*, as testified to by thousands of grateful users, also Doctors and Nurses. *Often succeeds in a few hours.* The Heavy Drinker soon begins to Hate the taste of Alcohol, loathes the very smell, and nothing can induce him or her to drink it.

Full particulars and sample of this guaranteed safe, certain, *cheap and speedy Treatment*, showing how easily loved ones are being *reclaimed without their knowledge*, post free privately. Enclose Stamp.

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PROCTOR'S **PINELYPTUS** PASTILLES.

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FOR VOICE, THROAT, CHEST

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SAFEGUARD AGAINST COLD.

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It isn't pleasant to be laughed at, is it? It isn't pleasant to be kept back, talked down to, treated as if you were only there to be made fun of—all because you are nervous and blush so easily. I can cure your **Nervousness, Blushing, Timidity,** completely in a week, and show you how to realise those lofty ambitions that now you can only dream about. It is all so simple and so sure by My System of Treatment that you will be surprised at the rapidity with which you gain confidence and Will Power. **Write to me now** for full particulars of My System and free book. Don't delay, but do it at once, mentioning *Strand Magazine*. Address: **Specialist, 12, All Saints Road, St. Annes-on-Sea.**

TOBACCO HABIT

CONQUERED IN 3 DAYS.

I offer a genuine guaranteed Remedy for tobacco or snuff habit in **72** hours. It is mild, pleasant, strengthening. Overcome that peculiar **nervousness** and craving for **cigarettes, cigars, pipe, chewing tobacco,** or **snuff**; they are **poisonous** and seriously **injurious to health,** causing such disorders as nervous dyspepsia, **sleeplessness**, gas belching, **gnawing,** or other uncomfortable sensation in stomach; **constipation, headache, weak eyes, loss of vigour, red spots on skin, throat irritation, asthma, bronchitis, heart failure, lung trouble, catarrh, melancholy,** neurasthenia, impotency, loss of memory and will power, impure (poisoned) blood, rheumatism, lumbago, sciatica, neuritis, **heartburn, torpid liver, loss of appetite,** bad teeth, **foul breath,** enervation, lassitude, **lack of ambition,** falling out of hair, baldness, and many other disorders. **It is unsafe and torturing** to attempt to cure yourself of tobacco or snuff habit by merely stopping—don't do it. The gentle, safe, agreeable way is to **eliminate the nicotine poison** from the system, strengthen the weakened, irritated membranes and nerves, and genuinely overcome the craving. You can give up tobacco and enjoy yourself a thousand times better, while feeling in robust health.

STOP RUINING YOUR LIFE

BOOK FREE

My **FREE** Book tells all about the **wonderful three days' method.** Inexpensive, reliable. Also **Secret Method** for conquering habit in another **without his knowledge.** Full particulars, including my **Book on Tobacco and Snuff Habit,** sent in plain wrapper **FREE.** Don't delay. Keep this; show it to others.

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Jaeger Jersey, 24-in. - - 11/6.

JAEGER JERSEYS for BOYS.

All small boys love a neat, well-made Jersey. They like to wear it on all possible occasions; and when out for play, well! the Jersey is part of the game.

Make your boy happy by giving him a Jaeger Jersey this year.

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PRICE'S "REGINA" SHAVING STICK.
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They are made by the world-famed House of Price's, and carry their guarantee of excellence. Your chemist sells all three.

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for discerning men

Bargains in Real Irish Household Linen

UNCRUSHABLE DRESS LINEN

for Spring and Summer wear. We offer a large variety of shades in this beautiful fabric for ladies' gowns and children's frocks. It is made from all pure flax, dyed perfectly fast colours. We can supply it in the following shades: White, Ivory, Cream, Tussore, Pink, Cerise, Strawberry, Resida, Myrtle, Saxe, Navy, Black, Grey, Helio, and Mauve. 36 ins. wide, **4/-** per yard. To-day's value, **6/6.**

HAND-WOVEN HOMESPUNS.

Genuine Hand-Woven Homespuns, all pure Wool. Woven by the Peasantry in their homes in the mountains of wild Donegal; thoroughly shrunk, 28 ins. wide, **6/-** per yard; suit length, 7 yds. for **40/-**; coat and skirt length, 8 yds. for **46/-.**

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Bundles of Plain Linen-finish Bleached Cotton Sheets, very superior quality, single bed size, 54 by 90 ins., two pairs for **40/-**; 60 by 100 ins., two pairs for **50/-**; 2 by 3 yds., two pairs for **60/-**; 2½ by 3 yds., two pairs for **69/-.** We can recommend these sheets for durability and hard wear.

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In bundles of remnants sufficient to make six full-sized Bedroom Towels, only **12/6**; postage 9d. Send postcard for this month's Bargain List, free.

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Special lot of Hemstitched Irish Linen Tray Cloths, fine quality, size 15 by 22 ins., 4 cloths for **6/6.** Postage 6d.

Safe Delivery of Parcels Guaranteed.

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OUR GUARANTEE.—Any goods not approved can be returned to be exchanged, or money refunded.

Huttons 200, LARNE, IRELAND.

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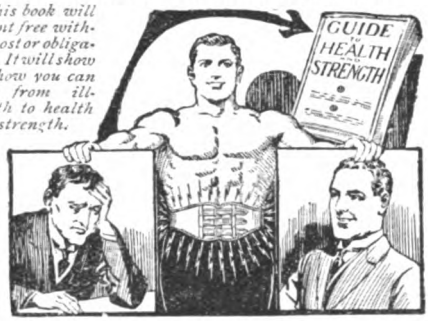
ELECTRICITY THE NATURAL REMEDY

Weak Nerves lead to all sorts of functional disorders. Without a plentiful supply of Nerve Force the power of every organ to perform its function is diminished or impaired. Lacking Nerve Force,

—The blood travels slowly in its channels.
—It is imperfectly oxygenated.
—Food is undigested and not assimilated.
—Elimination of waste matter is insufficient.
—The blood becomes tainted with poisonous matter.
—There is in-nutrition or mal-nutrition.
—The brain is incapable of great or sustained effort.
—The whole tide of life in the body is low.

This book will be sent free without cost or obligation. It will show you how you can pass from ill-health to health and strength.



All the functions being imperfectly performed, there begins a state of anarchy in the body. The stomach rebels and there is Indigestion. The liver "strikes" and there is a Sluggish Liver or Biliousness. The kidneys fail, and there are Uric Acid Disorders, including Rheumatism and Gout. Even the brain becomes affected, resulting in Insomnia, Brain Fag, and other Mental and Nervous Troubles.

ELECTRICITY RESTORES NERVE FORCE

It is not drugs nor medicine that can replace this deficiency of Nerve Force. These can only coerce or coax overworked and enfeebled organs into temporary functional activity. Electricity is the natural co-equivalent to human Nerve Force, and the success of the Pulvermacher Electrological Treatment is wholly due to the fact that it restores lost Nerve Force by the most scientific and successful method.

CURATIVE ELECTRICITY IN YOUR HOME

You can wear the Pulvermacher Appliance to your business daily or even while asleep. Although powerfully electrical, they give no shock to the system, but gently and steadily pour a continuous and curative flow of electricity into all the nerve centres. The whole nervous system responds quickly and sympathetically, and immediately all the functions of the body begin to be performed healthfully, easily, and with their natural vigour.

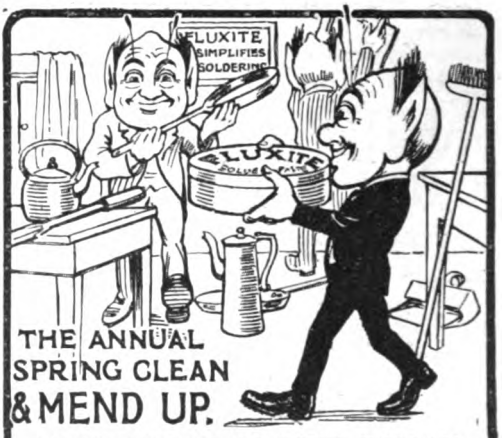
Write for this "Guide to Health and Strength" to-day.

If your nerves are weak,
If your digestion is poor,
If your liver is sluggish,
If you are constipated,
If you have Rheumatism or Gout,
If you are easily tired and depressed,
If you lack confidence or will-power,

or if you are in any way "below par," "run-down," or ailing, you will find the secret of health in its pages.

Post to the Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, Ltd., 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

Those who can do so are cordially invited to call for a personal and free consultation upon their Health Trouble.



IF YOU HATE IT LIKE POISON

—with Plumbers here and Plumbers there, all a mess and a muddle, do the job yourself and let

FLUXITE

help you. FLUXITE in the home means that you can tackle all soldering jobs—leaking pipes, weeping kettles, pots and pans, "groggy" garden tools, etc., and it's so easy with FLUXITE. No trouble, no wages, no waste of time—simply the job done, that's all.

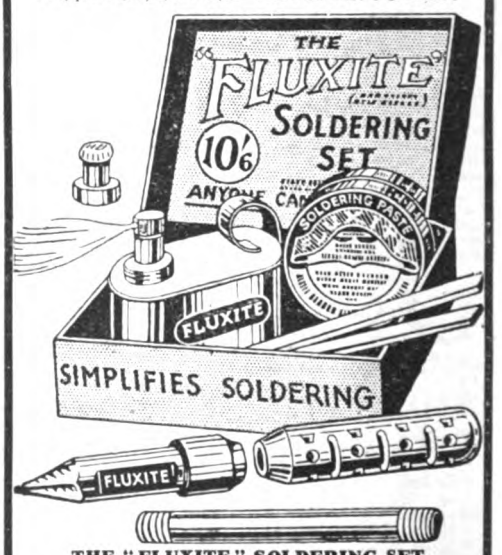
As a matter of fact, all mechanics *will* have

FLUXITE

because it

SIMPLIFIES SOLDERING

Ask your Ironmonger or Hardware Dealer to show you the neat little Fluxite Soldering Set. It is perfectly simple to use, and will last for years in constant use. All Hardware and Ironmongery Stores sell Fluxite in tins, price **8**d., **1/4** & **2/8**. ***BUY A TIN TO-DAY.***



THE "FLUXITE" SOLDERING SET
contains a special "small-space" Soldering Iron with non-heating metal handle, a Pocket Blow-Lamp, Fluxite, Solder, etc., and full instructions. Price **10/6**, Sample Set, post paid United Kingdom.
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Icilma Beauty Fascinates

The girl who uses Icilma Cream day by day has a complexion that wins admiration from the men folk. She is always sought after at the dance, and her "card" is full early in the evening. In fact, wherever she goes —"dance," "concert," or "dinner"—she fascinates.

You too can be just as attractive, for the secret is simple. Icilma Cream—the wonderful natural beautifier —will make and keep *your complexion fresh and clear, your hands, arms, neck and shoulders smooth and attractive.* Use it daily—that's the important point.

Get a pot to-day and judge for yourself; and a box of Icilma Bouquet Face Powder at the same time.

FREE TEST

Send a postcard for a dainty free sample, and a copy of our booklet, "The Icilma Way to Beauty," International Icilma Trading Co., Ltd. (Dept. 16), 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, King's Road, St. Pancras, N.W. 1.
Postcards MUST have 1d. stamp— Envelopes 2d. stamp

Icilma Cream

Price 1/3; large pot 2/-, everywhere. Flesh-tinted Cream, 1/9 per pot. Icilma Bouquet Face Powder (two tints—Naturelle and Crême), 2/6 per box.

Use it daily and look your best

—and complete your toilet with Icilma Bouquet Face Powder.

HEALTHY WOMEN

must wear "healthy" Corsets, and the "Natural Ease" Corset is the most healthy of all. Every wearer says so. While moulding the figure to the most delicate lines of feminine grace they vastly improve the health.

The CORSET of HEALTH

The Natural Ease Corset, Style 2.

9/11 pair. *Postage abroad extra.*

Complete with Special Detachable Suspenders.

Stocked in all sizes from 20 to 30. Made in finest quality Drill.

SPECIAL POINTS of INTEREST.
No bones or steels to drag, hurt, or break. No lacing at the back. Made of strong, durable drill of finest quality, with special suspenders, detachable for washing purposes. It is laced at the sides with elastic lacings to expand freely when breathing. It is fitted with adjustable shoulder straps. It has a short (9 in.) busk in front which ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks and Eyes. It can be easily washed at home, having nothing to rust or tarnish.

"The History of the Health Corset may be set out in a few lines—it is founded on Science, improved by Experience, and beautified by Art; its perfection is the result of the co-operation of the Artist and the Expert."

These Corsets are specially recommended for ladies who enjoy cycling, tennis, dancing, golf, &c., as there is nothing to hurt or break. Singers, Actresses and Invalids will find wonderful assistance, as they enable them to breathe with perfect freedom. They yield freely to every movement of the body, and whilst giving beauty of figure are the most comfortable. Corsets ever worn. EVERY STITCH BRITISH. Support British women workers and reduce unemployment.

SEND FOR YOURS TO-DAY.

HEALTH CORSET COMPANY (Dept. 65), **Morley House, 26/28, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.**
Edwin Turpin & Co., Ltd.

Terrible Irritation.

Burning, Itching Eczema, which almost drives you mad with irritation, especially when you go to bed or get heated; Ulcerated Legs and Ankles with skin all purple and black, causing terrible torture, and Inflamed Wounds which never heal, are caused by

Acid Poison in the Blood.

The Cure is Hood's Medicine in Tablet Form. These sugar-coated tablets expel the acid poison from the blood and give a lasting cure of skin troubles which are blood troubles. You cannot expect to cure unless you deal with the poison in your blood. Blood impurities cannot exist in the system where Hood's Medicine is used, so take it and get rid of the acid poison, and you will not only have a healthy skin, but will eat better, sleep better, work better, and feel better.

Hood's Medicine is quite different from all other treatments you may have tried. It is not a secret remedy, but is composed of roots and herbs named on every bottle. It has cured people who never expected to be cured, and during two years alone Hood's Medicine received more than 40,000 letters of grateful thanks.

Get this 1/- Book FREE.

Send 1/- for full six days' trial test of Hood's Medicine Tablets, with which we will send you absolutely free Hood's A.B.C. Home Doctor Book—160 pages—over 200 illnesses, rules for health, diet, and sickness fully explained.

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Re-introduction of the

Morton Morris Chair

Developed from a suggestion of William Morris, this cosy Adjustable Chair was, before the War, in demand throughout the world. It is now re-introduced with new improvements. You will appreciate its comfort, distinctiveness, and moderate cost. Let us send you a Booklet illustrating a range of models from 63/-.

The one shown here is in Solid Oak, Jacobean style, with adjustable back (3 positions), and loose **spring-upholstered** seat in corduroy velvet (red, green, etc.). Foot-rest slides under seat, and the arm is designed to hold a tumbler. Price **6 Gns.**; or without foot-rest, **£4-19-6.** We send carriage paid in United Kingdom, and will refund price in full and pay return carriage if any chair fails to please on receipt.

Obtainable **direct** only.

Write for Booklet to-day, or if in London, call.

MORTON'S (Chair Dept.),
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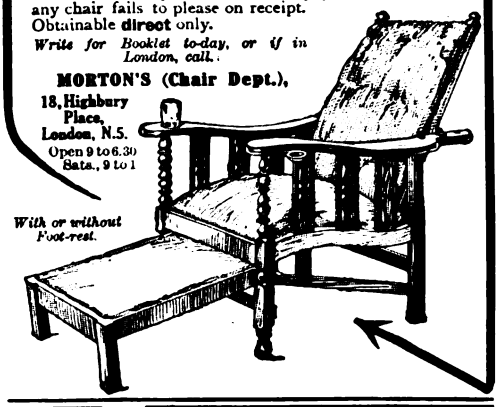
Open 9 to 6.30
Sats., 9 to 1



With or without Foot-rest.

Keep your Hair always in perfect trim with a

UNEEDA

SAFETY HAIRCUTTER

THE UNEEDA is the one and only absolutely efficient Self-Haircutter ever placed on the market; sold with a money-back guarantee. The UNEEDA enables you to cut your hair as you comb it, in the style that suits you best. Saves time and money.

Complete in Leatherette Plush-lined case, **10/-**
Packets of 6 extra blades, **2/6**

Try the UNEEDA at home on approval. Money returned if not satisfied.

Obtainable from Army & Navy Stores, Gamage's, Benetfink's, Harrod's, Selfridge's, Whiteley's, etc., or post free from

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which often ruin the health, without expensive and complicated appliances, without any special diet or change of occupation,

But by the simple evaporation of a resolutive liquid

which, applied as a harmless lotion to those parts of the body to be reduced, will greatly improve the general state of your health.

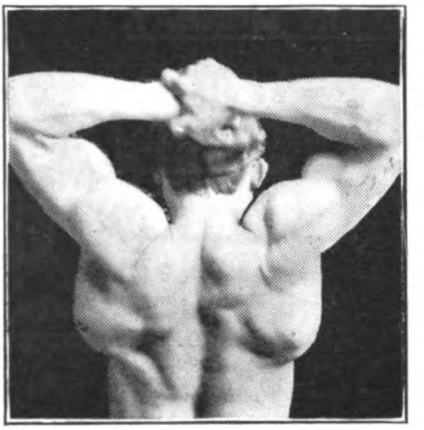
This wonderful discovery is causing quite a sensation in France, where extraordinary cures are being registered every day.

I CHALLENGE

anyone to prove that my "Eau Déperditrice" does not reduce fat within one week, does not definitely get rid of sagging cheeks and double chins, and does not remove all superfluous fat in general.

FAILURE IMPOSSIBLE.

For full particulars, which will be sent free in a plain envelope, write to: Eau Déperditrice Olbé, 22, rue des Martyrs (Dept. 70), Paris.



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It cures Constipation, Indigestion, Malassimilation, Rheumatism, Lack of Will-Power, Loss of Self-Confidence, Nervous Debility, Neurasthenia, and other Functional Weaknesses within a period of one to three months, by a scientific series of movements with CONTROL as the basic principle.

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has admittedly attained a foremost position amongst established weeklies

THE REASON WHY:

BECAUSE IT STRIKES A NEW NOTE.
IT IS DISTINCTIVE.
IT KEEPS YOU "IN TOUCH" WITH THE THINGS OF TO-DAY.

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"The little weekly has interested me so much and so often that it seems to me it must have been about for years."

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"I hope its triumphant progress will continue in an even greater degree."

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"You present in every issue compact supplies of varied and valuable literature and information, and no other journal renders for busy readers just that kind of service which called 'John o' London's Weekly' into being."

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Let the *Real* Beauty Shine Through

THE pigment which gives colour—complexion—to your face lies under two layers of skin.

Soap will cleanse these layers; but ordinary 'raw' soaps also clog the pores and make the delicate fabric dry, harsh and opaque.

Your natural complexion will shine *through* in all its beauty if you keep the outer skin clear and transparent.

Beauty Aids for Women

COLLEEN SOAP, 7d. per tablet; box of 3 tablets, 1/9.

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McClinton's Colleen Soap

7d. per Tablet. Box of 3 Tablets, 1/9.

Of all Chemists and Stores.

Colleen Soap does this in a delightfully easy, refreshing way, because, free from irritant chemicals, it contains nothing but pure, sweet, skin-nourishing vegetable oils and mild plant-ash, blended by the old-time McClinton process.

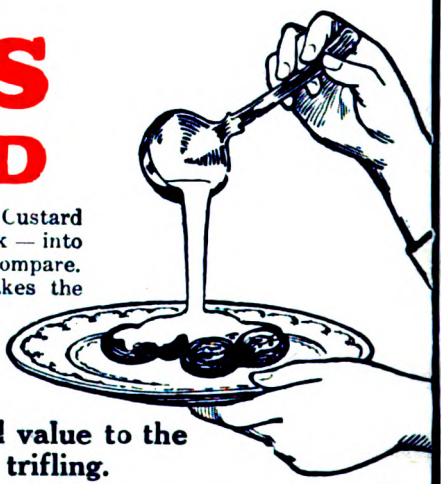
Every night rub in a warm-water lather of Colleen Soap with finger-tips. Rinse in cooler water, then with quite cold water. Dry with soft towel.

MADE by McCLINTON'S LTD. (Dept. F), at DONAGHMORE, TYRONE

Good living for ALL—and Cheap !

A very delicious dish, wholesome and full of nutriment, is **Stewed Prunes with**

BIRD'S CUSTARD

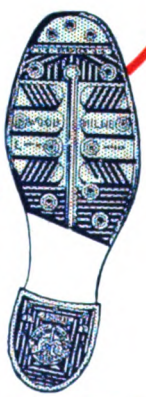


Without the use of a single egg, Bird's Custard transforms that precious food — milk — into a creamy Custard, delicious beyond compare. Stewed Prunes with Bird's Custard, makes the most appetizing dish now in season.

Serve the BIRD'S Custard with the prunes, either when freshly-made and hot; or, if preferred cold – well whisked.

Bird's Custard adds 25% food value to the milk, and the cost per person is trifling.

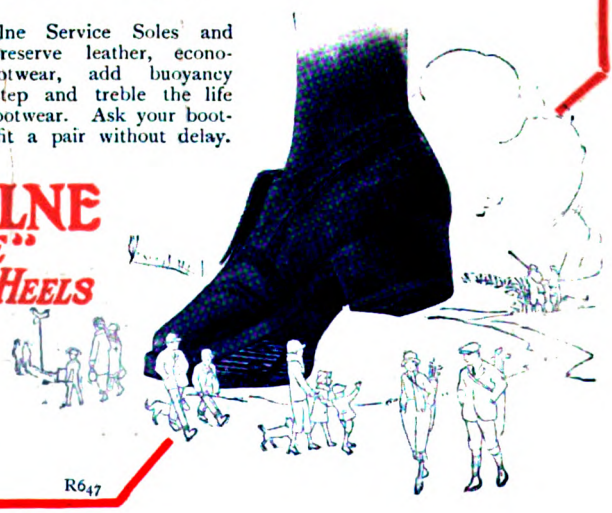
C20



The "All Sports" Sole

Wear Wood-Milne Service Soles and Heels for all outdoor sports. For walking—they reduce fatigue; for golf—they give firm grip on grass; for fishing —they prevent slipping.

Wood-Milne Service Soles and Heels preserve leather, economise footwear, add buoyancy to the step and treble the life of your footwear. Ask your bootman to fit a pair without delay.



WOOD-MILNE "SERVICE" RUBBER SOLES & HEELS

Made by the Pioneers of the Rubber Heel Industry.

In sizes for ladies, men and children of all ages.

R647

TRIKING ARTICLE BY

IR E. MARSHALL-HALL

ON JURIES & JURYMEN

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SINGING

BY

TETRAZZINI

FRY'S
Festal Chocolates.
Large Pieces.
Choice Variety.

See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Another Adventure of

"THE FOUR JUST MEN"

BY

EDGAR WALLACE

AND

Seven other fine Stories

June, 1921.

— A —

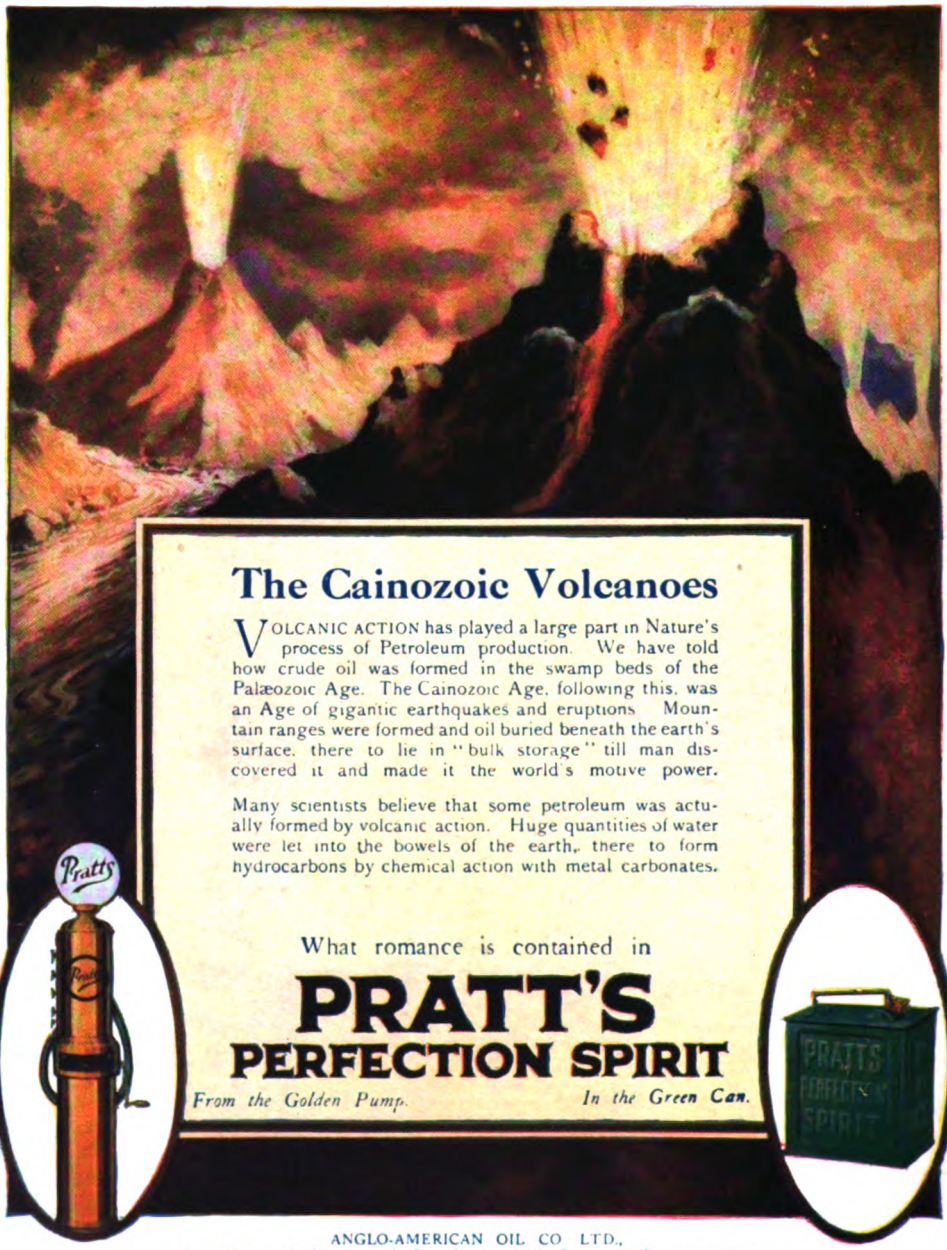
GOOD TURN

When you have read this copy pass it on to a friend.

No. 366
VOL 61

1/- net.

The Story of Nature's Bulk Storage—No. 3.



The Cainozoic Volcanoes

VOLCANIC ACTION has played a large part in Nature's process of Petroleum production. We have told how crude oil was formed in the swamp beds of the Palæozoic Age. The Cainozoic Age, following this, was an Age of gigantic earthquakes and eruptions. Mountain ranges were formed and oil buried beneath the earth's surface, there to lie in "bulk storage" till man discovered it and made it the world's motive power.

Many scientists believe that some petroleum was actually formed by volcanic action. Huge quantities of water were let into the bowels of the earth, there to form hydrocarbons by chemical action with metal carbonates.

What romance is contained in

PRATT'S PERFECTION SPIRIT

From the Golden Pump. *In the Green Can.*

ANGLO-AMERICAN OIL CO. LTD.,
Head Office: 36, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W., Branches & Depots everywhere.

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ENO HAS PROVED ITS MERIT

Fifty years ago the world tried ENO and discovered its unique qualities. Out of a host of competitors it has established a reputation for purity and excellence which the medical profession heartily endorses. That is why you should take it, if you are not already accustomed to do so.

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ENO's FRUIT SALT

The ENO Symbol of Happiness

The cause of such irregularities as indigestion, loss of appetite, biliousness, headache, lassitude and depression is removed in a perfectly natural manner by the daily use of ENO. This pleasant safeguard to health is pure, palatable, simple and effective. Always keep a bottle handy.

"ENO" is sold by Chemists and Stores throughout the world.

The words "ENO" and "Fruit Salt" are the registered Trade Marks of J. C. ENO, LTD., "Fruit Salt" Works, London, S.E.

ACTION

Decide quickly! Act quickly! and within six to twelve months you may qualify yourself to fill a responsible position in business

—Six to Twelve Months!

"That might easily be possible," you say, "in the case of a man with the advantages of wide experience. But it would not be possible in my own case, because I have had very little experience in business and no special training."

Our answer to you is that hundreds of our students whose circumstances were similar to your own are this day actually filling well-paid positions as accountants, secretaries and managers for which they qualified within six to twelve months of enrolment.

"Give me positive proof of that statement."

Positive proof is given you in a leaflet we send you with our Prospectus. This leaflet reproduces records of scores of our students, and you will notice that these records are certified genuine by a Public Notary.

The School of Accountancy's guarantee to train you until you are qualified to fill a responsible position opens up before you a clear and practical path of progress

When we undertake to train a man to qualify for a specific position or to pass a professional examination, we train that man until he succeeds.

Although most of our students complete their courses within six to twelve months of enrolment, there is no fixed time limit and the fees do not vary whether the training takes a few months or a few years. *Every student who enrols for a professional examination course is given an unqualified guarantee that he will be coached until he is successful in passing the examination for which he has undertaken training.*

Why not raise yourself to a Professional status?

At the London Association of Accountants' Examinations held during the past six years, nearly all First Places and Prizes were secured by School of Accountancy students. At the Chartered Institute of Secretaries' Examinations our showing is 100 per cent. passes in twenty of twenty-two examinations. Achievements at the examinations of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and Society of Incorporated Accountants are equally remarkable.

In all commercial examinations our record is one long string of First Places, Medals, Prizes and Distinctions.

Commence Training Now

You may say "Enrolling now means summer-time study." That is true, yet it is equally true that opportunities do not choose any special season to arrive. At the most it means training but one summer, and the sacrifice is worth while because other summers will be much better ones for you. From April to November a man is at his best mentally as well as physically, and therefore is in most excellent form for training during these months.

✷ *Take Action To-day!*
Send for this FREE BOOK

It contains useful information about business and business training, gives particulars of all our Courses and Terms, and includes facts which will actually and definitely convince you that our training will qualify you to fill a responsible executive position.

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Millgate Buildings, Long Millgate, MANCHESTER.
62, Dale Street - - - LIVERPOOL.
Post Office House, Infirmary Street, LEEDS.
8, Newhall Street - - BIRMINGHAM

THE FINEST GIFT FOR YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN

What else than a guarantee that should anything happen to you, the breadwinner, they are safeguarded against privation. The act that assures that financial protection is, beyond all possible doubt, the finest gift you can make to your wife and children.

Looking particularly pleased with himself, a business man remarked to a friend who had commented on his unusually good spirits, "I've just removed a great burden off my shoulders. I've made it all right for my wife and kiddies should anything happen to me."

Asked to explain, he said:

"Well, I don't quite know why, but for the last few months I've been obsessed with the thought, 'Supposing anything should happen to me, what would Jeannie and the children do?' You know I haven't had too many chances of putting by money. A very few hundreds before the war, nothing, as you know, during it; and, lately, the slump. Taking stock of the position, I discovered that, so far from having enough to live on, they'd scarcely have enough to pay the rent. That wasn't good enough, and I felt I dare not any longer leave it to time and good fortune to make the matter right.

So, after very careful investigation, I put through what I consider the best business transaction of my career.

I took out a Sun Life of Canada Investment Insurance Policy for £2,000. Immediately there was that additional sum and half of the deposit I had made between my dependants and privation should anything happen to me.

What takes me most is the half return of deposits, in addition to the Capital sum assured.

I deposit £113 12s. each year for 20 years (my age, by the way, is 38), so that every deposit made increases the value of my Estate by £56 16s. I tell you, it makes the writing of the cheque easier, knowing that!

But—and this should interest you, complaining as you are always doing about the enormous Income Tax—I get a substantial rebate on Income Tax entirely because of this Investment-Insurance Policy. This year it is no less than £17. A gift from the Government! It reduces my deposit, in effect, to £96 12s. Should the rate keep the same—3s. in the £—in the 20 years I shall have saved in Income Tax alone £340. Absolutely a gift!

And yet the half of the tale has yet to be told. If I live the 20 years—and I mean to!—I myself shall benefit to the tune of £2,000 with profits. These, it is estimated, will be £810. Add to this the rebated Income Tax of £340, and the total sum received will be £3,150. As the total deposits will be only £2,272—my investment will show a net profit of £878, on which no Income Tax is charged or chargeable. So that, compared with ordinary investments, the profit is equivalent, in round figures, to £1,250!"

* * * *

The Investment-Insurance Plan outlined above can be adopted at any age, for any amount, and for any number of years.

The Assets of the Sun Life of Canada exceed £23,000,000, and the company is under strict Government supervision. Anyone interested should write at once for full particulars, giving his or her age and the amount it is proposed to invest annually. All communications treated in confidence. Write to J. F. JUNKIN (Manager), Sun Life of Canada, 6, Canada House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2.

A Pen in need (Waterman's Ideal) is a pen indeed.

Here is just one of many examples showing how Waterman's Ideal is regarded by busy writers. It is from **Sir Philip Gibbs**—the famous War Correspondent, and now Editor of *The Review of Reviews*:

"I have a high regard for Waterman's Ideal Pen, which was a faithful friend of mine in the war."

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

Three Types: "Regular," from **12/6**; "Safety" and "Self Filling," from **17/6**. No. 54, "Self-Filling," and No. 44, "Safety," with extra large nib, at **22/6**, *specially* recommended. Presentation Pens in Silver and Gold. Nibs to suit all hands (exchanged gratis if not quite right). Of Stationers and Jewellers. A copy of "The Pen Book," a charming illustrated brochure, sent free by post on request.

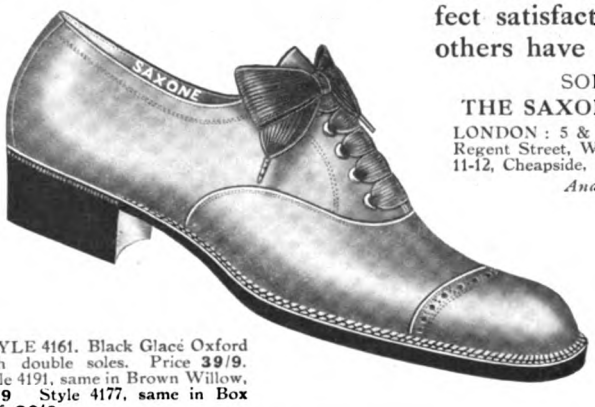
L. G. Sloan, Ltd., The Pen Corner, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

Your passport to satisfaction : the name

SAXONE

(Reg. Trade Mark)

There is a great deal in a name when it is a guarantee that the shoe it represents is honest value to you, in workmanship, material and finish. Seek your nearest 'Saxone' Store, try on a pair of these shoes, and find perfect satisfaction as thousands of others have done:



STYLE 4161. Black Glacé Oxford with double soles. Price **39/9**. Style 4191, same in Brown Willow, **39/9** Style 4177, same in Box Calf. **39/9**.

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LONDON : 5 & 6 Coventry Street, W.1. ; **231**, Regent Street, W.1. ; 56 & 57, Strand, W.C , **2.** ; 11-12, Cheapside, E.C. 2.
And all large towns.

Buy Your TENNIS SHOES at Your Saxone Store

Use this fascinating Face Powder

At any time—a touch of *silk-sifted* Icilma Bouquet Face Powder forms an exquisite finish to your toilet.

This delightful toilet powder is *distinct and quite different* from all others. Every particle is *sifted through silk* till it feels like silk. Absolutely free from grit of any kind—and as light as air.

Perfumed with the *same fascinating perfume* that made Icilma Cream world-famous. Really adheres—absorbs odour and is very refreshing and cooling.

FREE
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Send a Postcard for a Dainty FREE sample Packet IcilmaBouquet Face Powder. International Icilma Trading Co., Ltd. (Dept. **14**), 37-45, King's Road, St. Pancras, London, N.W. 1.
Postcards MUST have 1d. Stamp—Envelopes 2d. stamp

Icilma

Bouquet
Face Powder

—twin sister of Icilma Cream. In dainty blue and gold boxes, 2/6. One size only. Two tints—Naturelle for most complexions, Crème for brunettes. Your Chemist stocks it.

—after using Icilma Cream complete your toilet with Icilma Bouquet Face Powder.

Restful and Home-like Upholstery at Economical Prices.

THE "HOLYROOD."

EASY PAYMENTS or CASH.

CARRIAGE PAID TO ANY RAILWAY STATION.

Cash with order.

Settee, one end adjustable, Loose Cushion,	**£19**	or Easy Payment	**£21—£3** down, **15/-** mthly.
Arm Chair, "Forty-winks" Head Rests,	**£10**	,, ,,	**£11—£2** ,, **10/-** ,,
Divan Chair, Club Pattern - - -	**£9**	,, ,,	**£10—£2** ,, **10/-** ,,
Three-Piece Set, Settee & Pair of Chairs,	**£38**	,, ,,	**£42—£4** ,, **30/-** ,,

Luxurious and soundly upholstered. Woollen Flocks. Coppered Steel Springs. British Webs. Seats, Backs and Arms all well sprung. Covered in a variety of French and other Tapestries. Patterns submitted for Customer's selection.

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. (Dept. E). **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL**

Rudge-Whitworth
Britain's Best Bicycle

Standardised 1921 Models fully guaranteed

Ladies', Gents', and Sporting Bicycles

ONE PRICE **£12** Reduced from £15 : 15 : 0

AERO-SPECIAL QUALITY

Rudge-Whitworth Ltd.
Makers of
Bicycles, Motor Bicycles,
Steel Balls & Ball Bearings,
Detachable Motor Car Wheels,
COVENTRY. BIRMINGHAM. LONDON

By Appointment
Cycle Makers to
H.M. KING GEORGE.

230, Tottenham Court Road, W.1

Tourist Trophy Winner, 1914

Prices of other Motor Bicycles and Side-cars also reduced. **£85** Reduced from £110 : 5 : 0

3½ h.p. Sloping Tank Motor Bicycle. Clutch, Starter, and the FAMOUS MULTI GEAR.

1921 MODELS FULLY GUARANTEED.

Ask your nearest Agent. *Write for Catalogue, post free (Dept. 201), COVENTRY*

Rudge Multi

£500
Offered for Ideas
YOUR OPPORTUNITY

GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., Proprietors of the "Strand Magazine," etc., offer the above sum for Simple Suggestions.

TRY IT!

THIS competition is open to every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE or any other of Newnes' publications, a list of which is given on the facing page. You need no artistic, literary, or even business knowledge to win one of the prizes. The child at school, the wife in the home, and the man in the street have all an equal chance. Read what follows :—

IDEAS ARE WORTH MONEY

Few people realize the importance of the *idea* in an advertisement. Many of the most famous advertisements of our time are the results of simple suggestions made by people who knew nothing of the craft of publicity. The well-known phrase "Worth a Guinea a Box" originated in that way. Again, "Bubbles" was not painted as an advertisement of Pears' Soap, but a member of the firm saw its possibilities, and the picture was purchased. Scores of similar instances could be given.

First Prize -	£200
Second Prize	£100
Third Prize -	£50
20 Prizes of-	- £5
25 Prizes of-	- £2

No Entrance Fee

WE WANT YOURS

Everybody has ideas of this kind at some time or other—a happy phrase which may become the "slogan" of a great business, a rough suggestion which may blossom out as a poster of world-wide fame. We are convinced that hundreds of good ideas are wasted for lack of opportunity to utilize them. Well, here is the opportunity. If you have an idea or suggestion of any kind which you think may be of any use to any of the advertisers in any of the Newnes publications, SEND IT IN.

AN EQUAL CHANCE FOR ALL

WHAT TO DO

Look through the advertisement pages of this magazine; select any advertisement you like, see if you can get a new "idea" for advertising the same article—or an improvement on the advertisement. Try to pick out the essential points which the advertiser is trying to convey: then see whether you can present them in more novel or striking manner. Apply this test to several advertisements and you will soon find suggestions coming to you—a phrase, a suggestion for a picture, or an *idea* for a picture.

WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR IDEA, sketch it out, or describe it in a few words as plainly as possible, attach the coupon, and send in as directed in the Rules. Remember that it does not matter whether your sketch is good or bad, from an art point of view, or whether your idea is described in polished phrases or not. It is the *Idea*, and the idea alone, that will count.

All Ideas sent in will first be submitted to a committee of advertisement experts. It will be their business to utilize and carry out your ideas in proper form. They may be sent in crude or imperfect. In this way any lack of technical knowledge on the part of the competitor will be made good, and the Final Judges will have only the *merit* of the idea itself to consider.

THE FINAL JUDGES

When the ideas have been thus "laid out" equally effectively from a technical point of view, they will be submitted to the Final Judges, who will then decide upon their relative merits *as ideas*, and award the prizes accordingly The following gentlemen, all of whom are well known in the advertising world, have kindly consented to act in this capacity:—

Sir FRANK NEWNES, Bart.
The Right Hon. LORD RIDDELL.
H. GREENHOUGH SMITH,
Editor "Strand Magazine."
GALLOWAY FRASER,
Editor "Tit-Bits."

You can take your Idea from any Advertisement appearing in any of the Newnes Publications published during the months of MAY, JUNE, JULY, *and* AUGUST, 1921.

STRAND MAGAZINE
TIT-BITS
JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY
LADIES' FIELD
The HOME MAGAZINE
THE WIDE WORLD
The GRAND MAGAZINE
OUR HOMES AND GARDENS
WOMAN'S LIFE
THE CAPTAIN
Leach's LADY'S COMPANION
" NEWEST FASHIONS
" CHILDREN'S FASHIONS

DON'T CONFINE YOUR EFFORTS TO THIS MAGAZINE. LOOK THROUGH THE OTHER PAPERS MENTIONED ABOVE. SEND AS MANY EFFORTS AS YOU LIKE.

READ THESE RULES.

1.—All entries which do not conform to these conditions will be disqualified.

2.—All Ideas submitted must apply to one of the commodities advertised in this or any other of the Newnes publications (see list below).

3.—Competitors may submit as many Ideas as they choose, but each separate Idea must be accompanied by a coupon cut from the publication in which appears the advertisement to which the Idea refers.

4.—All Ideas to which prizes are awarded become the absolute property of GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

5.—No Ideas can be returned, but any unsuccessful entries which appear to possess merit may be submitted to advertisers, and, if used, paid for by arrangement.

6.—The Judges' decision must be accepted by all competitors as absolutely final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Entries should be addressed to THE COMPETITION EDITOR, GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8, Southampton St., Strand, W.C.2, and the envelope marked "IDEAS" in the bottom left-hand corner. THEY MUST BE RECEIVED NOT LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 1921.

Coupon

Good for ONE ENTRY in the Geo. Newnes' ADVERTISING IDEAS COMPETITION

£500

POST THIS COUPON WITH YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO
The Competition Editor
GEO. NEWNES, LTD.
8 · SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND · W.C.2

NORFOLK STUDIO

"As Neat as Wax"

is the home where Johnson's Prepared Wax is used upon furniture, woodwork, floors and linoleum. It rejuvenates the finish and gives an air of immaculate cleanliness, is the ideal polish, and does more than merely polish — it protects with a satin-smooth, transparent coating. It does not show finger-prints—dust cannot adhere to it.

Johnson's Prepared Wax

Paste—Liquid—Powdered

saves much of the time spent in mopping and cleaning. It preserves the colour and finish of linoleum and makes daily cleaning unnecessary.

Johnson's Paste Wax—for polishing floors of all kinds—wood, linoleum, tile, marble, etc., in **6d.**, **1/6**, **2/-**, **2/6**, **4/-**, **8/-**, and **14/6** sizes.

Johnson's Liquid Wax—for polishing furniture, woodwork and Motor Cars, in **2/6**, **4/-**, and **8/-** sizes.

Johnson's Powdered Wax — immediately gives any floor a perfect dancing surface, in **1/9**, **2/6**, and **4/-** sizes.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, West Drayton, Middlesex.

Send 6d. for a trial size of Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste.

Racine, U.S.A.; Brantford, Canada; Sydney, Australia.

One of the most talked of Necklets at Cannes

turns out after weeks of charming deception to be

Ciro Pearls

Thus writes a well-known Riviera correspondent in a famous weekly journal.

THE story goes that it was enterprisingly pawned for its full value as real after too much fatal maximuming on the part of its fair owner.

AT Cannes, amongst the cream of English aristocracy and a congregation of the richest people in the world, Ciro Pearls have been worn undetected, not because the owners could not wear real pearls, but because people realise that to spend fabulous sums on such is sheer extravagance.

A ROW of pearls is essential to your toilet. Real ones you will not buy, and Ciro's only are worth your consideration, as you may wear them without fear of detection and the cost of same is within the reach of all.

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea, we will send you a necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16ins. long, complete with case, or a ring b ooch, ear-rings, or any other jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls. If after comparing them with real, or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former, or superior to the latter return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money.
Other lengths at proportionate rates, gold clasp 2/6 extra.
Our booklet No. 12 contains designs of all new jewels (sent post free).

CIRO PEARLS, Ltd. (Dept. 12), 39, Old Bond Street, W. (Piccadilly End.)
Our Showrooms are on the First Floor over Lloyds Bank.

Every time you wear a shirt made of "*Permacola*" it is new again.

The Permanent-Colour Shirting.

REPLACED IF NOT PERMACOLA TRADE MARK COLOUR FADES

Secure this absolutely definite Guarantee behind every Shirt you wear.

Select your Shirtings not only for tasteful colourings, but also for their permanence. Avoid disappointment after the first wash-day by seeing the "Permacola" Tab on every shirt you buy. It secures to you the most perfect and permanent woven colours, fine texture, and excellent wear.

Obtain Shirts and Pyjamas of "Permacola" Fabric from your own Shirtmaker or Outfitter. Also sold in the piece, for Ladies', Children's, and Men's garments. Always look for the name "Permacola" on the selvedge or on the garment tab.

Write for pattern folder showing range of shades—free on request, together with name of nearest Shirtmaker or Outfitter stocking "PERMACOLA."

THROUGH WHOLESALE ONLY.

HASLAMS LTD (ESTAB. 1816) MANCHESTER

One of Cottonland's Master Creations.

C.1.

HOW SHALL MY SON EARN A GOOD LIVING ? £1,000 PER YEAR

IS ANSWERED IN OUR FREE BOOKLET :-

"How to get into the Motor Trade"

M.S.C. INSTITUTE OF AUTOMOBILE ENGINEERING (DEPT K)

14 HOOD STREET

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE

Distinction in Dress

does not necessitate frequent and costly tailors' bills.

Periodical renovation of clothing is alone essential to maintain the immaculate appearance demanded in modern business and social circles.

The "Cherry" Service has over 50 years' reputation. It offers unique and unusual facilities for imparting an exclusive finish, and restores the original newness to season-worn garments by cleverly recapturing their former set and hang, thus rendering them worthy of long and continued wear.

The sign of good service.

CHERRY SERVICE IS GOOD SERVICE

Costumes cleaned & tailor pressed .. 9/6
Gent.'s Suits ,, ,, .. 8/-
Raincoats ,, reproofed .. 7/6

Other articles cleaned at equally reasonable prices. Returned carriage paid.

Make CHERRY'S—the firm with over 50 years' reputation—**YOUR renovators.**

CHERRY'S Art Dyers & Cleaners *(Dept. S.M.),* **BURNLEY**

The worst weather for a solid week stands no chance against a Beacon Oilskin. It is waterproof; proof against Rain, Snow, Sleet, Hail, and Blinding Spindrift. In one you will be dry and cosy *always.*

BEACON OILSKINS

DON'T GO STICKY or LET IN THE WET

Money back in full if they fail to satisfy.

This **Bute** Coat will keep you dry and comfortable in a solid week of wet. It is made of light, smooth Oilskin, with wide skirt, Raglan shoulders, belt at back, inner storm cuffs, and two big pockets. In black, light weight, non-sticking Oilskin, In colours, **37/-**, Two-colour Oilskin Hat with adjustable brim, Bute quality material, to match, **8/6.** Ladies Rubber Wellingtons, warm lined, from **21/-.**

ILLUSTRATED LIST POST FREE, describing money-back Guaranteed Oil skins for Outdoor Men, Women, and Children. Send a p.c. for it to-day to—

J. BARBOUR & SONS, LTD., 19, Beacon B'ld'gs, So. Shields, Eng.

DRI-PED
REG?

"Dri-ped" Leather Services

The Sport Test.

"That's fine! A full day on the wet grass, but feet still bone dry. Are your shoes 'DRI-PED' Soled too?"

That, in effect, is what every "DRI-PED" wearer says; for "DRI-PED" Leather never, under any circumstances, lets a single drop of water through. And more, it makes 12/- go as far as 20/- did before you wore "DRI-PED"; it costs a little more, but lasts at least twice as long as the best ordinary leather. That is why millions of people wear "DRI-PED," the Super-Leather for Soles, on repaired or new Footwear of all kinds.

"DRI-PED" is the very best sole leather that can be produced. Hides selected from the pick of the world's supply are scientifically tanned by an exclusive process, rendering the leather at least twice as wear-enduring as ordinary leather of equal thickness; lighter than ordinary leather of equal thickness, and absolutely waterproof.
It is unnecessary to use any attachments with "DRI-PED" soles to secure qualities which are inherent.
All footwear dealers can supply "DRI-PED" Soled Footwear; all footwear repairers can re-sole your boots and shoes with "DRI-PED." Look for the "DRI-PED" diamond, stamped in purple every few inches on each sole. There is no substitute for "DRI-PED." Decline inferior subterfuges.

In case of difficulty write to—

D9
SOLE PROPRIETORS—DRI-PED, LTD., BOLTON, LANCS.

STANWORTHS'„ "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **10/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

Buy your RING direct!

You save money, and can re-sell to us at any time at 10 per cent. less than the price you paid.

The RING BOOK, which we will send to you, illustrates 122 Beautiful Gem Rings in all their natural Sparkle, Colours, and Beauty. You can select from it quietly at home, *as if from the actual Rings*. People from all over the World have already bought by this *safe* and easy method.

You choose your Ring. We send it insured to your door. Within a fortnight you can send it back and receive your full money. If you are satisfied to keep it, we undertake to re-purchase, under Ring Book Conditions, after one year, ten years, **or at any time, at 10 per cent. less than the price you have paid for it.**

WRITE NOW FOR "THE RING BOOK"

We send the RING BOOK and finger SIZE CARD Free to anyone interested in a buying way in value-guaranteed Engagement Gift, Dress, and Men's Rings, **priced from £5 5s. up to £325.**

The NORTHERN, GOLDSMITHS Co.
No. 6, GOLDSMITHS' HALL,
"The RING SHOP for the WORLD,"
NEWCASTLE-upon-TYNE, England.

Increase your Salary by Spare Time Study—

YOU may have to work many hours a day—I.C.S. Courses are prepared especially to meet the requirements of busy people. No matter in what line of work you may be engaged, a course of training with the I.C.S. will qualify you for a better position with higher pay. Moderate inclusive fees; easy terms of payment.

POST THE COUPON TO-DAY!

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS, LTD.,
16, International Buildings, Kingsway, W.C.2.

Please send me your free book containing full particulars of the Course of Correspondence Training before which I have marked X.

..Mining	..Steam	..Advertising
..Mechanical	..Boiler	..Window Dressing
..Draughtsmanship	..Agriculture	..Chemistry
..Shipyard Ditto	..Poultry Farming	..Textiles [graphy
..Electrical	..Civil Engineering	..Wireless Tele-
..Building	..Business Training	..Woodworking
..Marine	..Secretaryship	..Furniture
..Motors	Salesmanship	..Fruit Farming

..Professional Examinations

NOTE.—If the subject desired is not in above list, write it here:—

.....

Name .....

Address .....

FREE BIG CATALOGUE OF MONEY SAVING CHINA BARGAINS

FREE GIFTS HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS SHEWN IN ACTUAL COLORS FOR ALL BUYERS

HOUSEHOLD and Private Orders our **SPECIALITY.** Splendid Bargains in China, Pottery, and Glass. Tea Sets from **11/3.** Dinner Sets from **38/9.** Toilet Sets from **16/9.** Complete Home Outfits from **57/6.** **CATERING CROCKERY A SPECIALITY,** as supplied to "Daily Mail." Outfits for 50 Persons from **75/-.**

SPECIAL UNBREAKABLE QUALITY
China for Kitchen, Camp, Barrack, Hospital Use.

ONLY 28/9 **PACKED FREE**

This beautiful Tea Service, 12 persons, in charming Festoon design and Gold Finish. Splendid Quality. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**

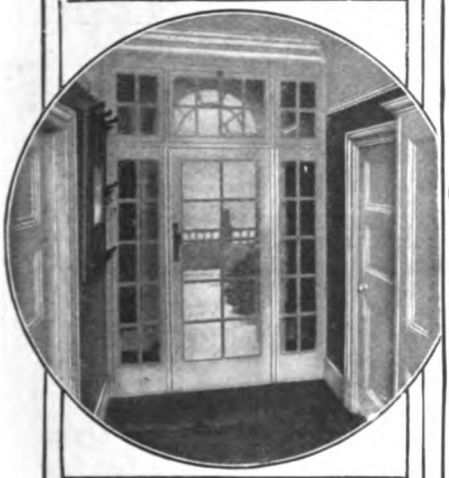
The Leading Pottery Mail Order Merchants. *Established 1903.*

Over 50,000 Customers: Full Value and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

Send Postcard To-day for Complete ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE **FREE**

One Hundred Designs shown in Actual Colours.

CENTURY POTTERY Coy
ADVT. S.M.7. BURSLEM. STAFFS.



An inviting
ENTRANCE HALL
produced with
"SATINETTE."

Deydol Distemper instead of Wall-paper is a splendid investment, and **Cripon Supervar** on surfaces requiring varnishing is unsurpassed for fine appearance and durability.

All good class Decorators will use the above materials at your request.

Satinette
TRADE MARK
ENAMEL PAINT

THE MOST ATTRACTIVE AND ENDURING OF ALL MODERN DECORATIVE "FINISHES"

NOW and for years to come you can gather the comfort and pleasure associated with a home that is decorated wisely and well—the first step is to CALL IN YOUR DECORATOR TO-DAY and ask him to restore all faded, perished paint work by refinishing with "SATINETTE" Enamel Paint.

Thus you will ensure surfaces as beautiful, durable and hygienic as porcelain tiling—surfaces that justify themselves by choice effect and by the protection and maintenance value they afford to property.

Don't leave it longer—whatever wants doing is best done NOW! Ask your Decorator to get busy with SATINETTE Enamel Paint.

Write for beautiful illustrated brochure which tells you all about "SATINETTE." Sent free and post free if you mention the name and address of your Decorator. Address the manufacturers below.

PINCHIN, JOHNSON & CO., Ltd.

Enamel, Varnish, Paint,
& Colour Manufacturers,

General Buildings, Aldwych, LONDON, W.C.2.

DRUMMER DYES DRUMMER DYES

4d.

Per Packet

Drummer Dyes are ready for use, needing no addition except hot or boiling water.

Never say "Dye" — say "Drummer."

One Dye for all Fabrics. So Easy to Use.

Keep your Drummer Dyes packets . . . Six prizes of £10, £5, £4, £3, £2, and £1 respectively, and 150 prizes of 10s. each will be awarded in cash to Drummer Dyes users sending in the largest number of empty Drummer Dyes packets by September 30, 1921, when the competition closes. State number of packets in parcel and address to Drummer Dye Packets Competition, Wm. Edge & Sons, Ltd., Drummer Dye Works, Bolton, Lancs.

The Drummer Sticks to his Colours

When you dye with Drummer Dyes, following the simple directions given on each packet, you secure exactly the colour you want— true, even, fixed. Subsequent washings and exposure to sunshine do not affect the shade a whit, for Drummer Dyes are fast, true dyes in every one of the 21 colours.

Light Blue	**Emerald**	**Cardinal**	**Daffodil**
Saxe Blue	**Myrtle**	**Maroon**	**Heliotrope**
Navy	**Brown**	**Rust**	**Mauve**
Light Green	**Nigger**	**Shell Pink**	**Grey**
Dark Green	**Red . Black .**	**Pink**	**Tangerine**

Fabrics of Silk, Cotton and Wool and mixtures of any of these are most successfully Drummer-Dyed—and remember Drummer-Dyeing makes it possible to exact treble wear from fabrics—clothing and household furnishings.

Sold by all Grocers, Stores, Oilmen and Chemists. Send for Free Booklet on Home Dyeing to Sole Manufacturers: WM. EDGE & SONS, LTD., BOLTON.

DRUMMER DYES

ALLEN'S FADELESS Durobelle

THE ORIGINAL PERMANENT DYE

"The 100% Fabrics"

Durobelle is for your sunniest windows.

Making casements, curtains, or coverings of Allen's Fadeless Durobelle is like investing money in gilt-edged securities—*except that the dividend is greater!*

Allen's guarantee to replace free of charge any length of Durobelle that fades, either through exposure or washing, secures your capital and ensures a *100% return* of efficiency—100% value for every shilling you invest.

That Durobelle fabrics are "100% beautiful" you can prove for yourself. Write to-day for patterns of the texture suited to your needs, and examine them at leisure with the thought uppermost in your mind that their exquisite tints are *guaranteed to last the life of the material.*

You *cannot* waste a penny in a pound's worth of Durobelle. The yarns employed are the best of their kinds, they are woven in textures exactly suitable for the purposes in view, and the wonderful *British* dye that makes the fadeless guarantee possible has withstood *world-wide test* for fifteen years.

HANDSOME CATALOGUE FREE.

Allen's Famous 100-page Colour Catalogue, "My Lady's Home," is free on request. It illustrates and describes all varieties of Durobelle, patterns of which can be had free on loan, including :—

31 in. Casement Cloths	1 9½ up	50 in. Poplins ..	4/11 up
50 ,, ,, ,,	2/11½ ,,	50 ,, Madras Muslins	2/11½ ,,
50 ,, Bolton Sheetings	3 11½ ,,	50 ,, Cotton & Artificial Silk Casements	8 11 ,,
50 ,, Fancy Damasks	4 11 ,,		
50 ,, Tapestries	12/9 ,,		
50 ,, Reps & Mattings	4/11 ,,	Washing Rugs from 22/6 ea.	

J. J. Allen

Department A.—BOURNEMOUTH

London Showrooms : 188, Sloane Street, S.W.

All Post Orders direct to Bournemouth.

SEND A POSTCARD TO THE FACTORY!

FREE BOOK OF 3,000 BARGAINS!

Write now to H. Samuel 31, Market St., Manchester, for his beautifully illustrated

FREE BOOK OF RARE BARGAINS

It's packed with thousands of offers in Jewellery, Watches and Plate at Factory Prices, with lists of splendid

FREE PRIZES for all buyers!

5 Diamonds in handsome Claw setting **75/-**

GOLD BROOCH Set with Amethyst & Pearls **9/-**

Diamond & Sapphire Crossover Ring **£5 10s.**

FULL MONTH'S TRIAL ALLOWED.

DAINTY WRIST WATCH. 15 jewelled lever movement, beautifully finished Rolled Gold Case.

OVERSEAS ORDERS *receive the prompt attention of a special manager. Catalogue mailed free.*

GENT'S SILVER LEVER. High grade fully jewelled lever movement, Sterling Silver Case. **35/-**

H. SAMUEL

31, MARKET ST., MANCHESTER

Over 85 Branches including :

WOOLWICH : 40 and 42, Powis St.
CROYDON : 16, North End.
NEWCASTLE : 2, Grainger St., W.
PORTSMOUTH : 141, Commercial Rd.
GLASGOW : 134-136, Argyle St.

Full List in the Big Free Book.

H. SAMUEL, LTD.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."
—JULIUS CÆSAR.

SPECIALISED POSTAL TRAINING—taken at home in spare time

LIST OF SUBJECTS:

Accountancy, Secretaryship, London B. Com. Degree, Banking, Costing and Factory Organisation, Income Tax, Company Law, Advertising and Sales Management, Business Organisation, Economics, Shorthand, etc., etc.

In the professional Accountancy and Secretarial Examinations, students of the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE repeatedly score RECORD SUCCESSES.

Never were Shakespeare's words truer or more apt than to-day. To every man—and woman—comes Opportunity although perhaps unheralded, and liable to slip by with equal lack of ostentation. The ability to see and seize YOUR opportunity in life, therefore, will largely govern the measure of SUCCESS that is coming to you.

If you are engaged in business—or desire to enter commercial life—the *only way* to make sure of going far, to reach to a responsible and highly-paid position, is to take up the most thorough and practical *training* available, viz., one of the numerous courses offered by the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE, the Varsity of Commerce, selecting the scheme of study best suited to your own particular needs.

The fact that this announcement has attracted your attention portends that HERE is YOUR OPPORTUNITY, and NOW is the PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT to avail yourself of it.

To investigate fully the prospects attaching to a METROPOLITAN COLLEGE training in your case, write to-day for the

"STUDENTS' GUIDE," FREE and POST PAID.

The New and Greatly Enlarged Edition of the "Guide," just published, contains particulars of scores of unrivalled courses, covering every student's every requirement, and including

SPECIAL COACHING for the NEW DEGREE of BACHELOR of COMMERCE.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE

Dept. S, **ST. ALBANS**

The "CAMEL"

The Camel, known as the "Ship of the Desert," stores water for many days' travelling. The "CAMEL" Fountain Pens store ink for many days' writing.

3 Sizes.
Fitted with 14-ct. Gold Nib, with Gold Top-feed.

5/-, 6/-, & 7/6

Every Pen Guaranteed.

Of all Stationers, or post free from—

ORMISTON & GLASS,
Contractors to H.M. Government,
SNOW HILL, LONDON, E.C.

WHY BUY FOREIGN PENCILS?

WOLFF'S
Royal Sovereign
PENCILS ARE BRITISH MADE

The finest Pencil in the World for Draughtsmen, Artists, and General use, because of its smoothness and great durability. Made in all degrees by The Royal Sovereign Pencil Co., Ltd., Falcon Pencil Works, Battersea, S.W. Famous over 100 years. By appointment to H.M. the King. Price 6d. each. Sold by all Stationers.

A Kitchen Marvel

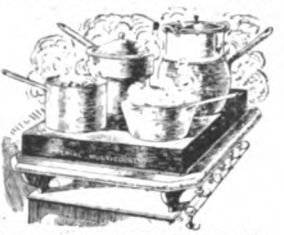
Wonderful Gas-Saving Invention to Reduce Heavy Gas Bills

LADY SAVES 11,000 FEET OF GAS

FREE Book on Gas Economy FREE

Remarkably good news is here published which will have far-reaching results in relation to Housekeeping Costs.

Everybody knows and has heard with extreme regret of the enormous increase in the cost of Gas which is now taking place. So high is the price now that it has become a serious problem for every householder.



GAS STOVE MULTICOOKER
for Boiling and Frying. Fits any Gas Stove.

NO MORE HEAVY GAS BILLS

There is, however, an old saying that "there's never an evil without a remedy," and it is with genuine delight that I am able to announce that the bugbear of High Prices of Gas for Cooking can be at once neutralised by the installation of one of the most simple yet one of the most effective gas saving devices that it has ever been my pleasure to describe.

Under the new Multicookery System, as it is called, any person with or without previous cooking experience can, if necessary, **Bake, Boil, Fry, and Stew all at one and the same time,** but with the use of ONE GAS BURNER ONLY of average consumption instead of the usual combination of 3 or 4 gas rings on the top of the stove and long bar burners inside the oven, as is absolutely necessary with the usual type of gas stove.

MULTICOOKER WITH OVEN
for cooking a complete meal.

11,000 FEET OF GAS SAVED

One lady, Mrs. L. G. Burrows, of West Ealing, saved no less than the enormous total of 11,000ft. of gas in one year. Her readings for the 3 years prior to her adoption of the Multicookery system were: 31,300ft., 30,600ft., 30,600ft. In the first year during which she used the Multicooker she saved 11,000ft. of Gas, despite the fact that quite as many hot meals, if not more than usual, were prepared, and that the Circulator for the Bath, as well as the Gas Fires, had been more in use.

GAS-RING MODEL
used independently of a Gas Stove.

This is the Super Multicooker, capable of cooking either a simple Breakfast or Luncheon, or a full course Dinner for from 2 to 20 persons.

NOTE: Only ONE Gas Ring is being used to cook a Full Course Dinner.

FREE PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS

Demonstrations of this Kitchen Marvel are given **daily** between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. at 42, Berners Street, Oxford Street, London, W., to which readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE are cordially invited.

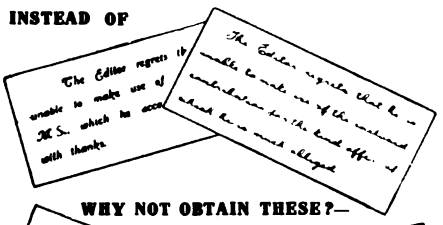
Here will be seen various types of Multicookers from 17s. 6d. upwards, so that every household, no matter its size, can immediately participate in Multicookery benefits.

For Country Residents, as well as those who find it inconvenient to attend the Demonstrations, full Printed Particulars, together with valuable Household Economy Information, will be sent free by post to all who write and apply to—

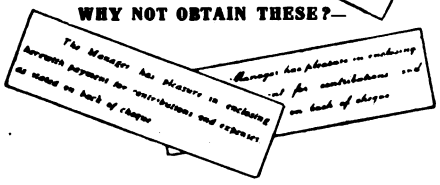
Multicooker Inventions, Ltd., Room 195, 42, Berners Street, Oxford Street, London, W.

LITERARY SUCCESS

INSTEAD OF



WHY NOT OBTAIN THESE?—



The untrained writer receives rejection slips; the trained writer receives cheques and requests for more work.

The writer who possesses a trained and ready pen can make plenty of money nowadays.

But it must be trained. That is essential.

Readers with literary tastes and aspirations should write to the College for a free copy of "Short Story Writing and Journalism" and "The Pen and the Mind."

These books show them how to secure the training and technique needed in order to put their abilities to practical and profitable use.

"I am already making enough to keep myself, and I shall not have been taking your course for a year until next month"—writes a recent successful student. (10,029).

THE LONDON CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE (*founded by T. P. O'Connor, M.P., in* 1909) Courses in Journalism and Short Story Writing are directed through the post by experienced authors and journalists.

The tuition given is comprehensive, thorough, and "individual" to each student. You are given a complete training in the technique of short story writing and journalism, and you are shown just how to acquire the qualities that catch the Editor's eye and the Public taste.

Write to-day for free copies of "Short Story Writing and Journalism" (Introduction by G. R. Sims) and "The Pen and the Mind," which give full particulars of the Courses in Short Story Writing, Journalism, English Composition, Advanced Literary Training, Verse Writing, and Mental Culture, to the

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Many of my Pupils find it great fun to sketch the "characters" and incidents encountered in the daily round. If you have natural talent (often indicated by *the desire to Draw*) you can be taught to do this quickly, pleasantly, and inexpensively, by post. This illustration is the work of a former Pupil who is now a leading Illustrator in the £1,000 per annum class.

My Postal Courses teach Drawing from the beginning. If you have never drawn a line, the BEGINNERS' COURSE will start you by the pleasant, easy way, which cuts out all worry and drudgery.

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Write to me personally: Percy V. Bradshaw, Principal,
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ASSURE AND "MAK SICCAR."

When Kilpatrick, henchman of Robert the Bruce, completed the slaying of Comyn, the rival of Bruce for the Crown of Scotland, he emphasized his deed with the grim words, "I Mak Siccar" (I make secure).

NOW IS THE TIME TO MAK SICCAR

Endowment Assurance makes your own future secure. Whole Life Assurance secures the future of your nearest and dearest.

A 20 LIMITED PAYMENT POLICY
with
The Standard Life Assurance Co.

affords one of the finest methods of providing for the future with freedom from payments in later years.

Send a postcard for a copy of Leaflet 17, illustrating the advantages of this Policy, to

The STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE CO. Est. 1825.

HEAD OFFICE: Edinburgh, 3, George St.
LONDON: 83, King William Street, E.C.4, 15a, Pall Mall, S.W.1.
DUBLIN: 59, Dawson Street.

Free
A 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent. See below.

Use 20 Times

Then see how your teeth improve

This offers you a ten day test of a new teeth-cleaning method—enough for 20 uses.

Each use will bring five much desired effects. See how your teeth conditions change after ten days' use.

A film combatant

The great object is to fight film—now regarded as a potential source of most tooth troubles.

Film is that viscous coat you feel. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and remains. The tooth brush, used in old ways, leaves much of it intact. So millions of teeth are dimmed by it.

Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. It is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth and the acid may cause decay.

Now a new era

Now dental science, after years of research, has found ways to fight film. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. And leading dentists everywhere now advise their daily use.

The methods are combined in a dentifrice called Pepsodent. Millions now employ it. And to their homes it has brought a new era in teeth cleaning.

Watch these five effects

Each use of Pepsodent brings five desired effects. The film is attacked in two efficient ways. The teeth are so highly polished that film cannot easily adhere.

Then it multiplies the salivary flow. It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva, to digest the starch deposits which cling. It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva, to neutralize the acids as they form.

Thus it increases, in a natural way, Nature's teeth-protecting forces.

See what this means. Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coat disappears.

This ten-day test will show the way to whiter, cleaner teeth. And it may mean their salvation. Cut out the coupon now.

Pepsodent
TRADE MARK

The New-Day Dentifrice

A scientific film combatant, combined with two other modern requisites. Now advised for daily use by leading dentists. Supplied in large tubes by druggists.

532

10-DAY TUBE FREE.

THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
Dept. 131, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1.
Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

Address.....

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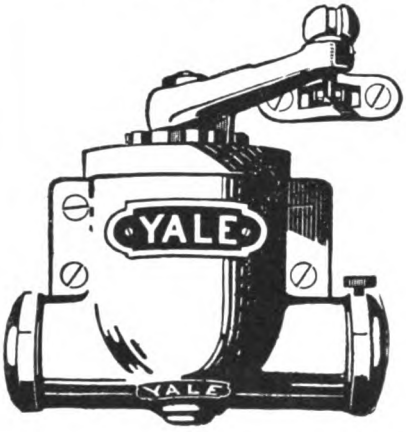
Give full address. Write plainly.
Only one tube to a family.

YALE



Trust a Yale Door Closer

STOP bother and annoyance, head off fuel expense, improve dignity and comfort, with a Yale Reversible Door Closer.

You will wonder how you ever got on without one. It closes the door perfectly, always *No more banging*, no more forgetting.

For any door in the home, office, factory, or public building. Sold by hardware dealers.

THE word Yale used in connection with Locks, Door Closers, Hoists, Carburetters, Industrial Trucks, etc., is exclusively the property of The Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company.

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The name Yale appears on every article we make as a guarantee that we made it

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Yale Made is Yale Marked

PRICE: With Radiolite Dial, **30/-**. With Non-Luminous Dial, **22/6.**

Actual diameter of outside case, 5 inches.

YOU CAN TRUST IT.

The Ingersoll Revally Radiolite differs from most Alarm Clocks. It looks better—it is better. It is the kind of Alarm Clock which breeds confidence.

You *know* it will wake you when you want to get up.

You *know* that its glowing dial is there at your bedside ready to show you the time at a glance. No blasts of cold air looking for matches to see the time in the dark.

The Ingersoll Revally Radiolite Alarm Clock is the "super" alarm—made from the finest materials—constructed, timed, and tested with usual Ingersoll thoroughness. It is guaranteed to give efficient time-keeping service.

Ingersoll

REVALLY RADIOLITE ALARM CLOCK

Glows time in the dark.

Sold by high-class Watch dealers everywhere. If any difficulty in obtaining, we will send Clock post free on receipt of price.

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PATENT AUTOMATIC

Water & Oil Finders

are used by leading Governments, Railway Companies, Land Companies, Well-Boring Engineers, and others.

A Colonial Engineer writes: "Since purchasing the Instrument I have selected 300 sites, most of which I have either bored upon with our own plants, or had bored by sub-contractors. In every instance we have been successful."

Prices of Water Finding Instruments are:

£50 locating at all depths up to 200ft.
£75 " " " " " 500ft.
£125 " " " " " 1,000ft.

Prices of Water and Oil Finding Instruments are:

£200 locating at all depths up to 3,500ft.
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Delivery at Colonial or Foreign Seaports £3 extra.

We undertake the location of sites and boring at lump sum prices under guarantee of

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Particulars on application to

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Makers of Well-Boring Plant, Pumps, Windmills, Oil Engines, and everything connected with Water Supply and Irrigation.

Cables: "MANTLES, LIVERPOOL." Telephone No.: 1392 BANK.

ACHING FEET

— do they spoil your enjoyment?

YOU cannot enjoy to the fullest extent many of the social pleasures if you are constantly troubled by foot ailments. It is needless to persevere with them in order that you may participate in these pastimes. Structural weakness, with a few exceptions, is the cause of foot aches and foot pains. No matter what your special trouble may be,

DR. SCHOLL'S FOOT-EASER
affords comfort and relief in a moment to tired, aching feet, weak arches, flat foot, etc. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes.
Price per pair, **10 6**

DR. SCHOLL'S TOE-FLEX
straightens distorted, crooked toes. Restores normal muscular action and, by closing the big toe joint, corrects bunions. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes.
Each **2 -**

DR. SCHOLL'S BUNION REDUCER
protects the sensitive inflamed area from pressure. Reduces the enlargement by absorption, and stops shoe bulging. Rights and Lefts in Men's and Women's sizes.
Each **2 6**

Dr Scholl's
FOOT COMFORT APPLIANCES

will supply a speedy remedy and gradually bring about permanent correction.

Flat or weak foot, weak ankles and run-over heels, pains in the instep, the heel, or the ball of the foot, bunions, crooked, buckled-up toes, corns and callouses, are the most prevalent amongst the many foot ailments that prevent people from enjoying their pastimes to the full—indeed, often precluding them from participating in sports or recreations that require foot comfort.

To-day there are well over 5,000 qualified Scholl Practipedists—men and women who have made a special study of the foot and its ailments—visit the one nearest to you and receive expert advice.

Write to us to-day for name and address of dealer nearest you, and secure a free copy of Dr. Scholl's Booklet, "THE FEET & THEIR CARE."

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FRY'S
PURE
BREAKFAST
COCOA
J.S.FRY.& SONS Lt
BRISTOL & LONDON
Loved by all the Bairnies
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PURE
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THEY LIKE THE "CHOCOLATE" FLAVOUR

DRAW THIS DAWSON GIRL and Win a Prize.

Competition for Amateurs above 16 years of age. NO ENTRANCE FEE.

1st Prize - value £10.10.0
(Stylish JAEGER Frock or Jaeger wear - your selection)

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(Year's subscription to 'EVE,' THE Artistic Fashion Journal)

20 Prizes - - - value 10s. 6d.
(Bottle LUCE'S famous JERSEY HEATHER Perfume)

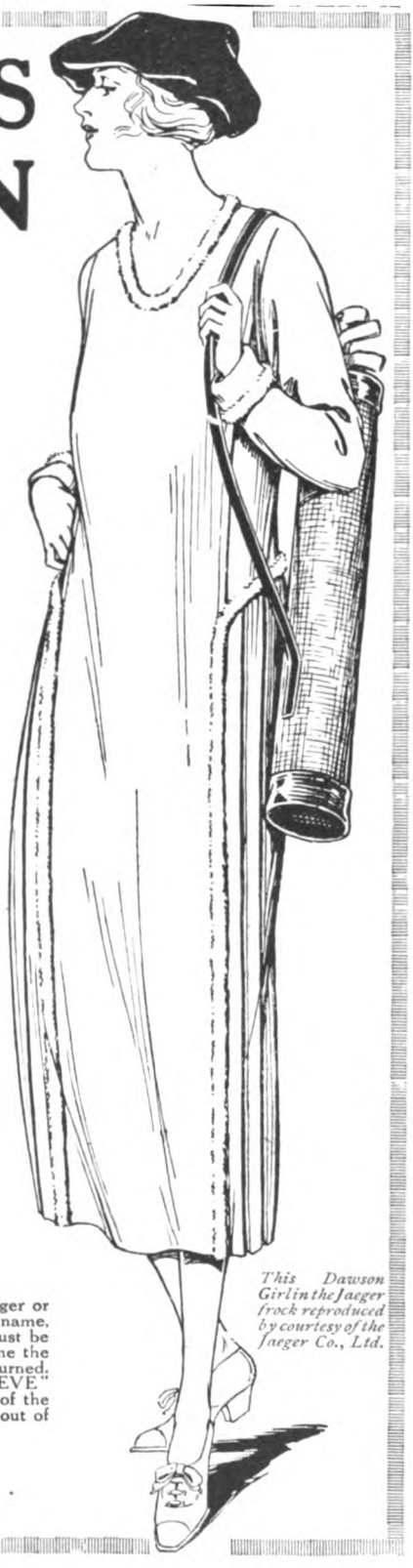
Successful Fashion artists earn huge incomes. Hundreds of ambitious young men and women have found their true work in life—and success—through the P.C.C. Home Study Courses.

With proper training you, too, should succeed.

Anyway, it costs nothing to enter this competition and see what you can do.

CONDITIONS.—Copy the Dawson Girl in the Jaeger frock, larger or smaller than the illustration. Use pencil or pen. Write your name, address, age, and occupation on back of drawing. Drawings must be received by June 25th, 1921. Prize-winning drawings will become the property of the Jaeger Co., Ltd. All other drawings will be returned. Drawings will be judged and prizes awarded by the Editress of "EVE" and the Managing Director of the Jaeger Co., Ltd. The decision of the Adjudicators is final as to awards and all other questions arising out of the competition.

Post drawing, with stamp for return, to Mr. CHAS. E. DAWSON, *Art Director, Strand Competition, Practical Correspondence College, Ltd.*, 57, Berners Street, W.1.



This Dawson Girl in the Jaeger frock reproduced by courtesy of the Jaeger Co., Ltd.

Miss Renée Kelly

says :—

"I have known and used POND'S VANISHING CREAM for some time; Pond's Cold Cream and Face Powder are delightful. I find these excellent preparations the best I have ever used."

The same fascination which delights the admirers of Miss Renée Kelly will delight the beholders of all women who regularly and persistently use Pond's—the original Vanishing Cream. Do not confuse Pond's with other face creams—Pond's is the premier toilet requisite: so easy to apply, so magical in its beautifying effect on the hands and the complexion. The pioneer Vanishing Cream—it vanishes instantly—no massage, no sticky after-effects. Use Pond's regularly night and morning from the opal jar, and carry the small tube in your hand-bag for use during the day. Prevents sunburn and roughness and redness of the skin.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

In handsome Opal Jars with Aluminium Screw Lids, 1/3 and 2/6, and Collapsible Tubes, 9d. and 1/3, of all Chemists and Stores. If you cannot obtain the new tube from your Chemist to-day, send us 9d. and we will despatch it per return, post free.

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Pond's Vanishing Cream

GREATEST BARGAIN OFFERED FOR YEARS. THE CAXTON SERVICES. DIRECT FROM THE POTTERIES

1 CRATE Contents:

1 Dinner Set for 6 persons.
1 Tea Service for 6 persons.
1 Breakfast Set for 6 persons.
1 Set of Jugs (3).

ALL TO MATCH as here shown, in lovely shade of Blue. Also 3 Pie Dishes and 3 Pudding Bowls (var's sizes) Plain White.

75/- Packed free. Carriage Paid. **75/-**

The Safe delivery The Crate. Guaranteed. Crate. Money returned if not satisfied.

FREE GIFT, 6 Apostle Tea Spoons, E.P.N.S., with the first 500 Crates sold.

ART POTTERY ALBUM post free, 500 Illustrations, Glass, Cutlery, etc. Goods shipped to all parts of the world.

THE FENTON POTTERY CO. (Dept. 1), **Royal Fenton Works, Fenton, Staffs.** [Estab. 1901.

As Fresh as Lavender!

Jackson's Lavender Cream cleans while it polishes. Use it regularly. A few brisk rubs upon your tables and chairs, sideboard and other furniture, with

JACKSON'S LAVENDER CREAM

make your rooms smell as fresh as new-gathered lavender; and the polish **lasts.**

In handsome Doulton Art Jars, of your Grocer, Ironmonger or Oilman.

BOOKLET ABOUT JACKSONIZING—Free. Write for copy to

T. S. JACKSON & SONS, LTD.,
MALT STREET, OLD KENT ROAD, LONDON, S.E.

Sole Manufacturers of Jackson's Floor Polish and Jackson's Varnish Stains.

Established 1853.

It is not the LIVER
It is INDIGESTION
IN STOMACH AND BOWEL
CICFA RESTORES DIGESTION

When you are travelling, visiting, or eating away from home, it is not the Liver, it is Bowel Indigestion which causes that troublesome CONSTIPATION. CICFA removes all that trouble, because CICFA restores Digestion.

HERE IS THE REASON

You have a Liver. You think it is affected. The chances are 10 to 1 that your Liver itself is perfectly sound, but its action is being upset by frequently dosing it with purgatives, etc., and as a consequence your food is not digesting, but fermenting and creating gases.

As it is rolled down the Bowel, the Starchy part, like bread, potatoes, beans, etc., is formed into little hard dry masses or "Starch Balls," which block the passage, and you have Constipation, also a defective Bile Circulation. Fermentation continues, and acids and impurities from the undigested food are absorbed through the wall of the Bowel into the blood and poured on into the Liver. Though your Liver may be quite healthy, it is soon overworked and giving you troublesome symptoms; therefore your symptoms are not due to an affected Liver, but to those acids and impurities which are formed by Indigestion in the Bowel and carried on to the Liver.

Your blood becomes impure and more acid, affecting your joints and deep muscles, causing Rheumatism, Lumbago and Sciatica.

It is therefore useless to treat the Rheumatism, the Lumbago, the Sciatica, or the Liver. They are not at fault. The fault lies in the Bowel Indigestion. You must remove that Indigestion by restoring Digestion.

Probably you suffer also from Acid Dyspepsia.

Whether you have Acid Dyspepsia or some other form of Stomach Indigestion, it should receive immediate attention, because each stage of Digestion affects each succeeding stage, so that the upsetting of digestion in one portion of the tract quickly affects digestion in other portions. Ordinary Indigestion remedies, such as Pepsin, Bismuth, Soda, Rhubarb, etc., cannot therefore be expected to cure you, for at best they can only help in local spots, **while any Remedy which can Cure must be able to correct the errors of Digestion wherever they are occurring throughout the whole alimentary tract.**

Cicfa can do this, because **Cicfa restores Digestion** at every point along the whole alimentary tract.

Cicfa ensures complete digestion of all the Albuminous food in the Stomach and all the Starchy food in the Bowel, corrects the Bile Circulation, prevents fermentation and the formation of "Starch Balls," so that all the nourishment is absorbed into the blood, the refuse is normal, and there can be no Constipation. Cicfa, in fact, ensures the formation of such Digestive Ferments as Nature requires.

INDIGESTION SYMPTOMS

IN STOMACH

GASES in STOMACH with eructations.

Sharp Neuralgic HEADACHES.

ACID in Stomach with HEARTBURN.

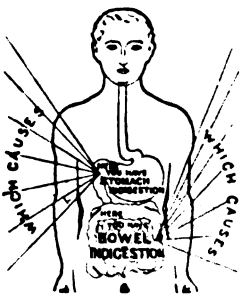
TONGUE coated white all over.

COMPLEXION blotchy, with redness of Nose.

EATING disliked. Some Nausea.

PAINS darting through Chest. Burning Spot behind left Shoulder Blade.

IN BOWEL



GASES in BOWEL or Flatulence.

Dull, Heavy HEADACHES.

ACIDITY causing Gout and Rheumatism.

TONGUE coated yellow at back.

COMPLEXION muddy or pasty.

EATING disliked or loathed. Biliousness and bad taste in mouth

PAINS in Bowel. Griping and CONSTIPATION.

A CHEMIST FOR 40 YEARS

Never recommended patent medicines, but he recommends and uses Cicfa. Read what he says:

8th Feb., 1919.

"I am writing to inform you of the great benefit I have derived from Cicfa. I have been a sufferer from Indigestion for some time and have tried many remedies without effect. A friend persuaded me to try Cicfa and the result has been marvellous. **All fermentation of food with flatulence has disappeared,** and I look forward with pleasure to a meal instead of dread, as formerly. **I HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS AS A CHEMIST FOR OVER 40 YEARS,** and have never recommended patent medicines, but I can with confidence **advise any sufferer** from Indigestion to **give Cicfa a trial."**

(Signed) "G."

18,000 BRITISH DOCTORS

have taken up Cicfa. Hundreds of them have written us of the splendid results which they have obtained by its use upon themselves, in their families, and in practice. When thousands of British Doctors are satisfied with Cicfa you do not need a sample with which to test it. There can be no better proof. You can purchase Cicfa and commence using it immediately.

Sold everywhere, prices 1/3 and 3/-.

THE CICFA CO., 8, DUKE ST., MANCHESTER SQ., LONDON, W.1.

MAKE YOUR MIND A MASTER MIND.

My System—"Nature's Perfect Process," based on deep psychological knowledge – will teach you how your mind can be trained in the ordinary course of your daily life, without the unnatural aid of health-breaking study or wearisome useless memorising. I can give you, as I have given thousands of others, the priceless gift of a tenacious memory and that acuteness in grasping and analysing the essentials of a problem which distinguishes the master-mind—the mind that forces its owner to the top and keeps him there.

LET ME HELP YOU TO SUCCESS,

as I have helped many leading business and professional men throughout the world. I will send you a new and enlarged explanatory Booklet gratis and post free on receipt of a postcard. Don't neglect this opportunity. Success is within your grasp. Close your fingers round it now and forge ahead.

Write to the address below and ask for prospectus, testimonials, etc.

The Geo. H. Cox Institute (Dept. K15), **National Provincial Bank Chambers, WOLVERHAMPTON.**

UGLY NOSES

UGLY NOSES. — My Patent Nose Machines improve ugly noses of all kinds Send stamped envelope for particulars and testimonials.

RED NOSES. — My long-established treatment absolutely cures. Recommende by medical authority. **4/-** post free. Foreign **1/6** extra.

C. LEES RAY, 10E, Central Chambers. Liverpool.

THINGS OF THE **PAST !!**

UNSIGHTLY HIGH BOOTS ABOLISHED.

APPLIANCES NOW BEING SUPPLIED TO WOUNDED SOLDIERS UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTRACT.

Pamphlet **FREE** to all mentioning THE STRAND MAGAZINE. Send particulars of your case. Address:

THE O'CONNOR EXTENSION CO., LD., SURGICAL BOOT SPECIALISTS,

(Booklet N),

2, BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.

THE 'Onward' Portable Gas Oven

WITH GLASS DOOR.

A good Oven is the first requisite for good results in cooking.

Price 55/- Inside Measurements— 18in. by 11½in. by 11in. deep.

Double Cased. Made from Blue Planished Steel and Tin Lined. Complete with Stove, Oven Tin and Grid.

IN the "ONWARD" Oven we have the rational method of baking or cooking. Simply connect gas ring to any existing gas supply with rubber or metallic tube. Light the gas and you will have baking heat in five minutes. Then put in the oven what you wish to bake or cook. No need to open the door. You may watch results while attending to other duties. Will burn three hours at a cost of 1d. for gas, and is the cheapest and most effective gas oven in the world. Send for Booklet: "A Hot Favourite."

May be obtained from any Ironmonger, or from Patentee and Sole Maker:

"S" Dept., EDWIN CHAMBERS, Ltd., "Onward" Works, BRADFORD.

These Series of Pens write as smoothly as a Lead Pencil. Neither Scratch nor Spurt, the Points being rounded by a Special Process.

Attention is also drawn to our **PATENT ANTI-BLOTTING PEN.**

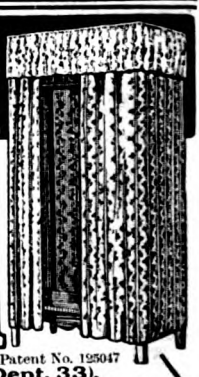
Assorted Sample Box of either Series for 10½d. in Stamps from the **Works,**

BIRMINGHAM.

The Stylcraft

WARDROBE

A great boon in Flats and small Houses



The "**Stylcraft**" Wardrobe is a novel and inexpensive substitute for the ordinary high-priced wooden Wardrobe. It gives identically the same service, at a fraction of the cost, and imparts to the Bedroom an air of delightful freshness and charm. Consists of folding wood frame with bottom part, shelf, and row of hooks. Draped in beautiful Cretonne. Easily dismantled. Size 3ft. wide. Price **77/6**. Carriage paid in U.K. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back. *Write for illustrated Pamphlet.*

Patent No. 125047

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Take my Tip
and get
Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe
It's jolly good!

Have you had any Egg and Cream-de-Luxe? That's a stunner: and Chocolate Toffee-de-Luxe is top-hole.

. . . . . You can take the tip of such a keen toffee judge with confidence: for trust him to have tested all the toffees—*he knows his subject.*

Mackintosh's Toffee is sold by Confectioners everywhere in ½-lb., 1-lb., and 4-lb. Family Tins, and loose by weight.

Make this year your best Holiday.

The Royal Ruby is at your service for it. The

ROYAL RUBY

will take you anywhere and everywhere. It is designed for hard service, and is made of the finest material by British workmen

Write for Illustrated Catalogue to "Dept. 12."

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Showrooms and Service Depot: 162, Deansgate, Manchester, where demonstrations and visits to the works can be arranged.

All Prospective Campers

should send 4d. to LIGHTWEIGHT TENT CO. (Dept. S.), 61, High Holborn, London, for all lists. Cycle, Motor, Pedestrian (easily carried), Garden, Bathing Tents, Portable Light Baths and Hammock Beds a speciality. Tents as supplied to Officers of the 1st and 2nd Life Guards for Active Service. Our Outfits are a proved success all over the world.

Double Roof Colonial Tents Special

Shippers: Cox Shipping Agency, London, and India.

Rare Ukraine Trident (Cat. 10/-) Free

to all purchasers of the NEW RUSSIAN packet, No. L.115, which contains 63 different stamps, including, among other countries, RUSSIA:—Imperf. Romanoff and Currency issues, all unused; General Denikin's issue, GEORGIA, ESTHONIA, LETTLAND, NORTH-WEST RUSSIAN ARMY, UKRAINE imperf. issue, and TRIDENTS from KIEFF, ODESSA and KHARKOV, rare ARMENIAN PROVISIONAL, &c. Price 1/2, post free. Only one packet to each applicant. GREAT FREE GIFT OFFERS.—Every 10th applicant for this packet will receive ABSOLUTELY FREE a copy of BRIGHT'S WAR AND ARMISTICE CATALOGUE, published at 1/-. Every 25th applicant will receive FREE a RARE SET OF 10 UKRAINE (Cat. 4/6).

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Dr. A.H.R.—"My wife finas Jelloids very agreeable and easy to take."

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For Anæmia in Women—Iron Jelloids No. 2.
Reliable Tonic for Men—Iron Jelloids No. 2A.
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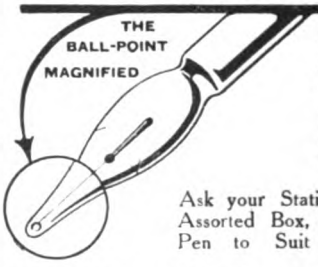
Iron Jelloids

BALL-POINTED PENS



Never Scratch or Spurt.

The Secret of Easy Writing is found on Every Point.

Ask your Stationer for a 6d. Assorted Box, and choose a Pen to Suit your Hand.

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OUR **BREECHES**

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IN BEDFORD CORDS, RIDING TWEEDS, DRILLS, &c. **25/- to 84/-**

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No matter where you are we guarantee to fit you perfectly, satisfy you or refund your cash.

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John Elkan

"THEY COME AS A BOON AND BLESSING TO MAN THE MARVELLOUS WATCHES OF JOHN ELKAN."

"COLONIAL" STRAP WATCH

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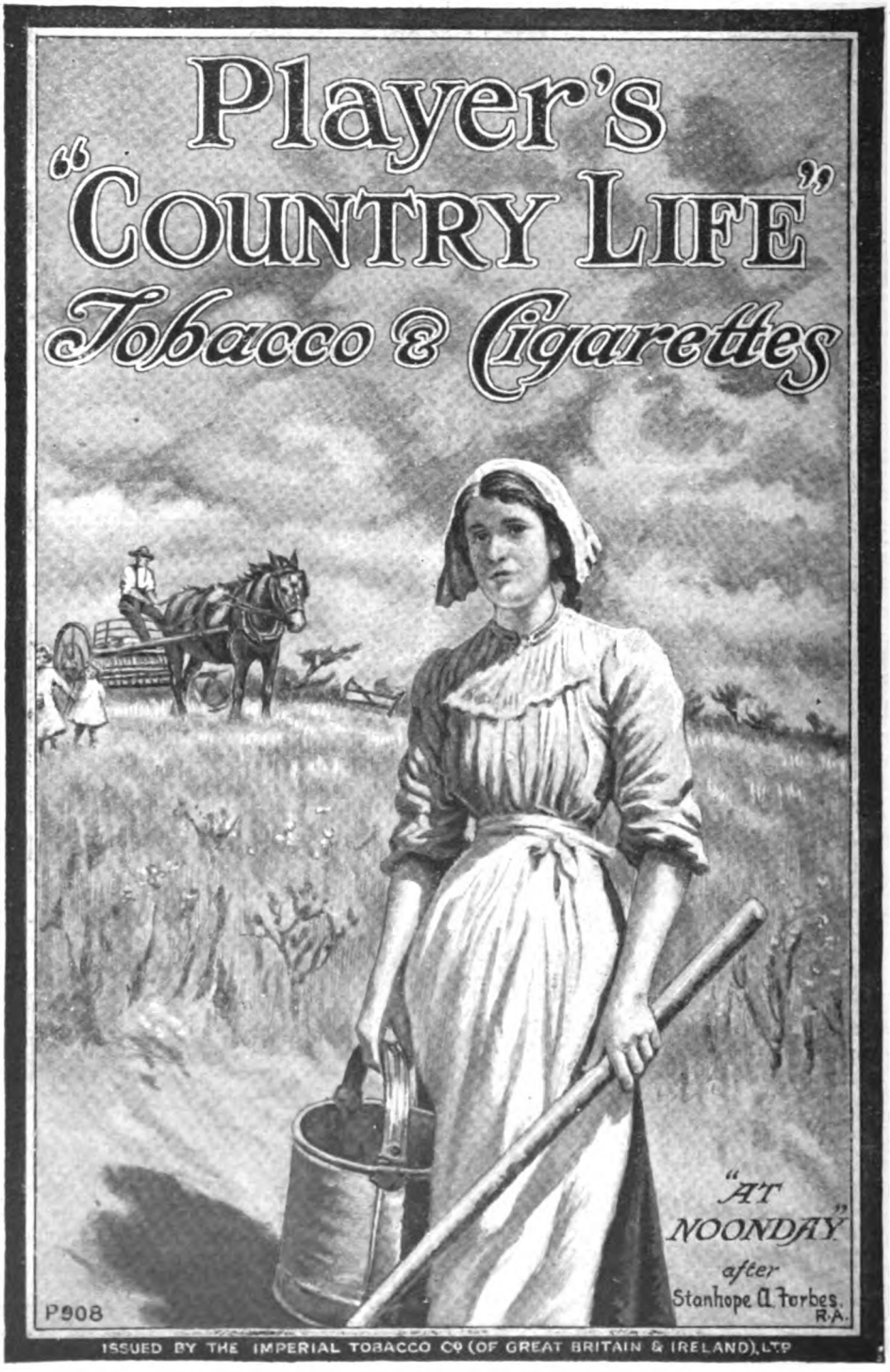
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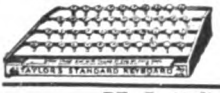

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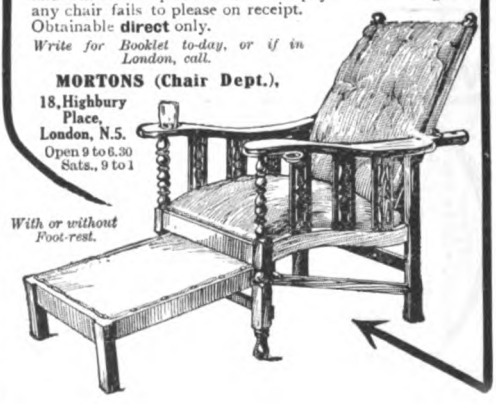

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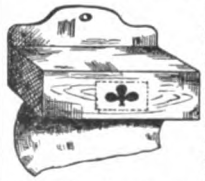

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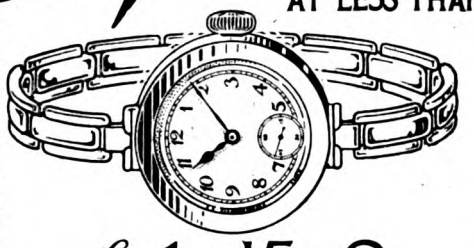

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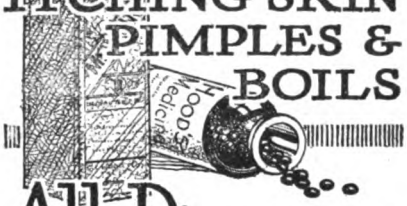

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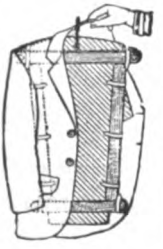

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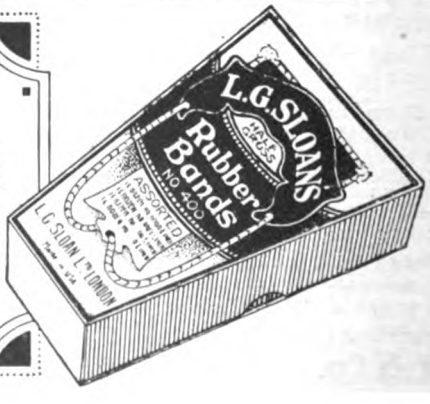

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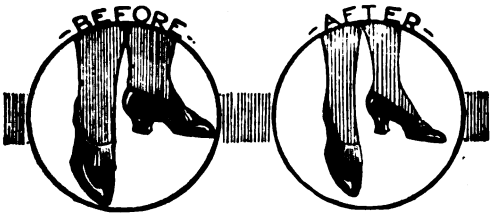

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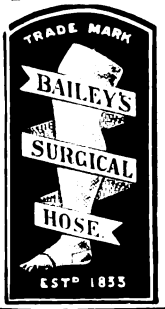

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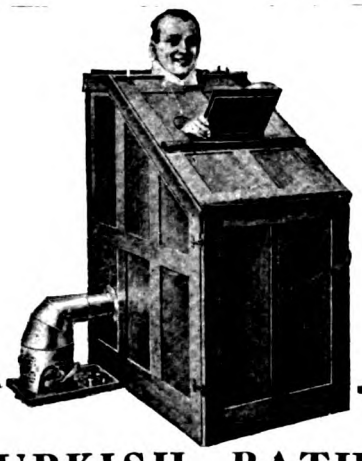

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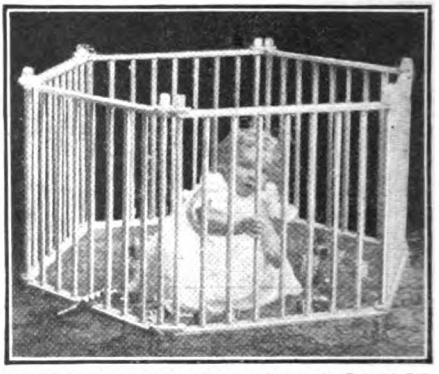

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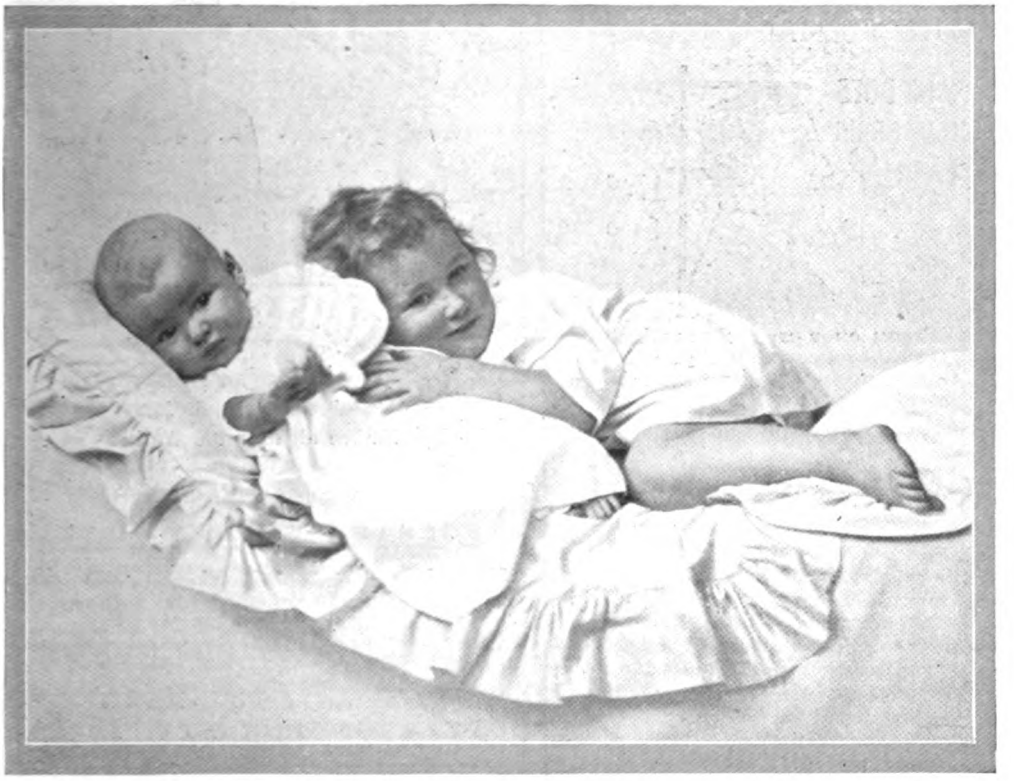

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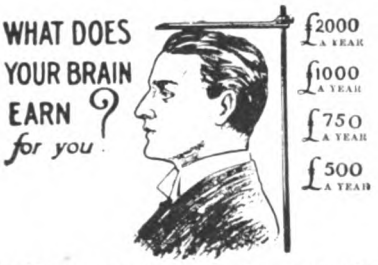

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for June, 1921.

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Frontispiece: "Gonsalez was kneeling by the body, looking with dispassionate interest at the lean neck. Then his keen eyes rose to the table, near where the Professor fell. 'What is that?' he asked, pointing to a small green bottle."

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THE
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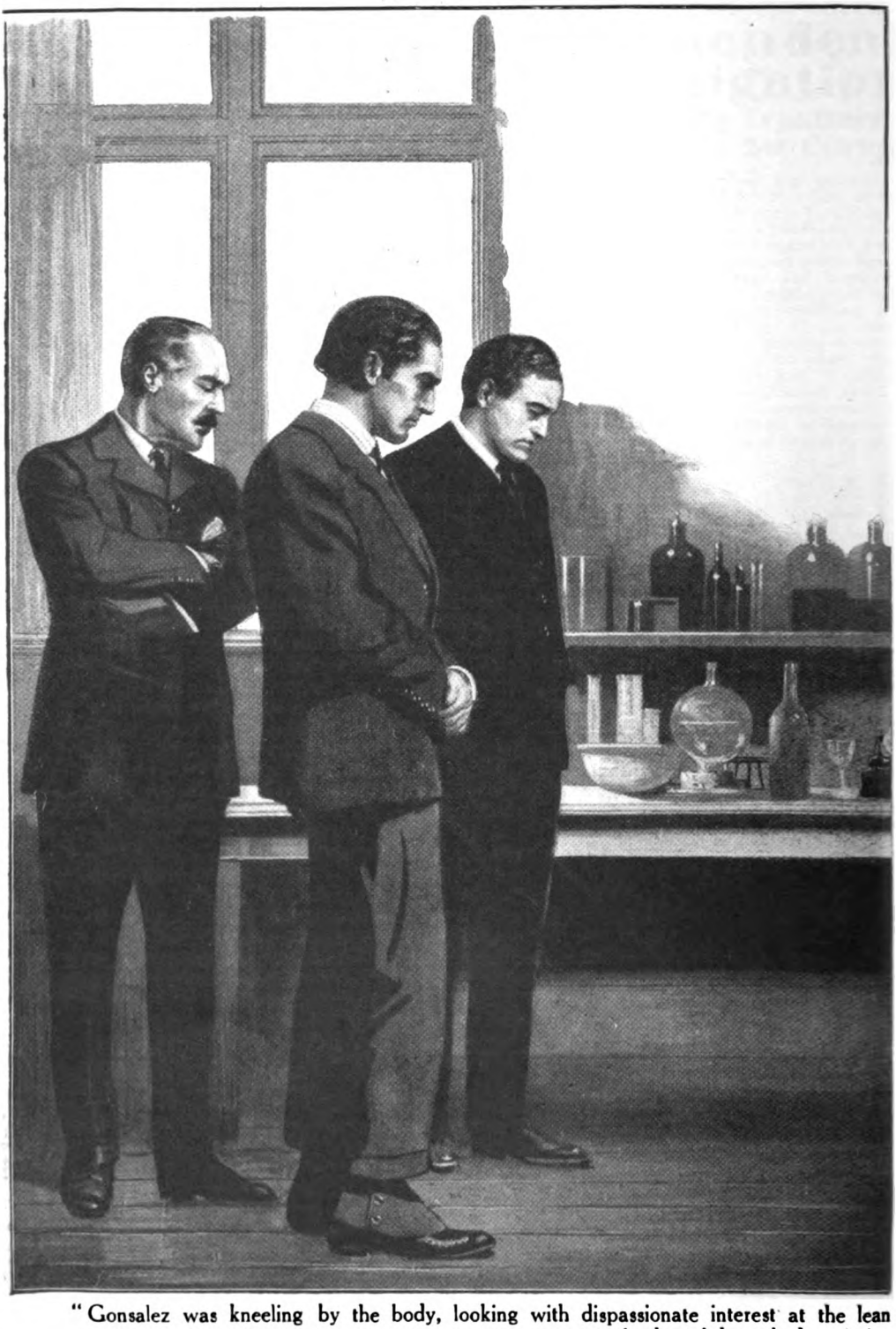
June, 1921



"Gonsalez was kneeling by the body, looking with dispassionate interest at the lean
is that?' he asked, pointing

Some Adventures of THE FOUR JUST MEN

Readers of Mr. Edgar Wallace's famous novel, "The Four Just Men," will remember that its title is the name of an organization which set itself to right acts of injustice which the law left unpunished.

by Edgar Wallace

ILLUSTRATED BY E. VERPILLEUX.

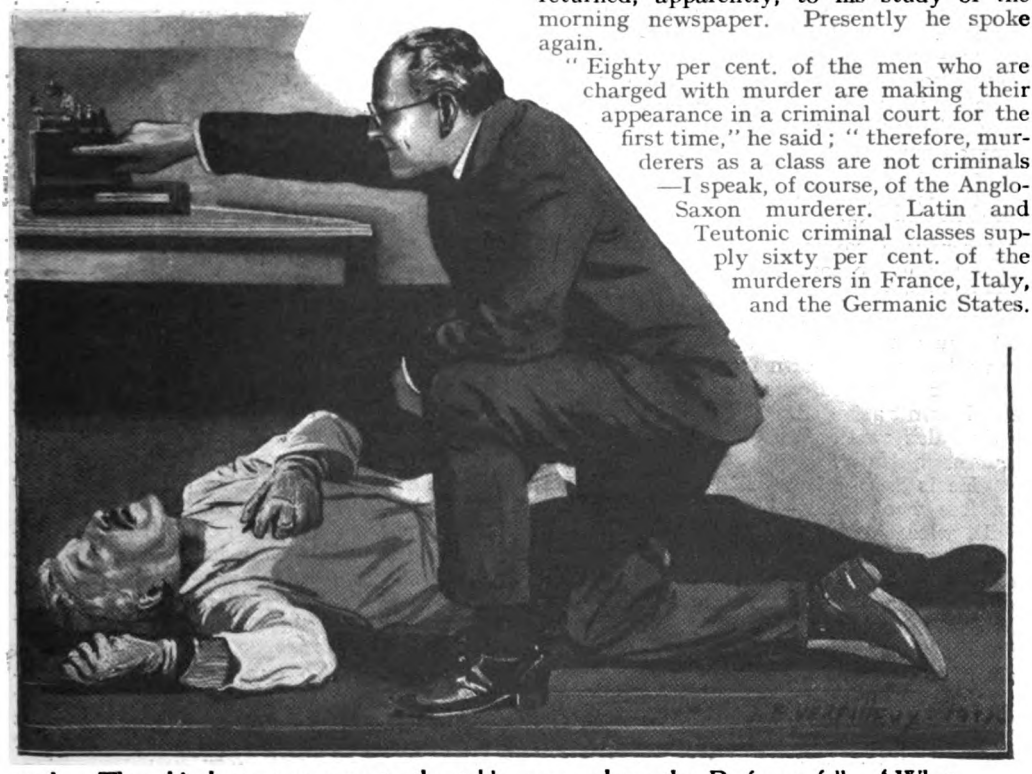
II.—THE MAN WITH THE CANINE TEETH.

"MURDER, my dear Manfred, is the most accidental of crimes," said Leon Gonsalez, removing his big shell-rimmed glasses and looking across the breakfast-table with that whimsical earnestness which was ever a delight to the handsome genius who directed the operations of The Four Just Men.

"Poiccart used to say that murder was a tangible expression of hysteria," he smiled; "but why this grisly breakfast-table topic?"

Gonsalez put on his glasses again and returned, apparently, to his study of the morning newspaper. Presently he spoke again.

"Eighty per cent. of the men who are charged with murder are making their appearance in a criminal court for the first time," he said; "therefore, murderers as a class are not criminals—I speak, of course, of the Anglo-Saxon murderer. Latin and Teutonic criminal classes supply sixty per cent. of the murderers in France, Italy, and the Germanic States.



neck. Then his keen eyes rose to the table, near where the Professor fell. 'What to a small green bottle."

They are fascinating people, George, fascinating!"

His face lighted up with enthusiasm, and George Manfred surveyed him with amusement.

"I have never been able to take so detached a view of those gentlemen," he said. 'To me they are completely horrible—for is not murder the apotheosis of injustice?"

"I suppose so," said Gonsalez, vacantly.

"What started this line of thought?" asked Manfred, rolling his serviette.

"I met a true murderer type last night," answered the other, calmly. "He asked me for a match and smiled when I gave it to him. A perfect set of teeth, my dear George, perfect—except——!"

"Except?"

"The canine teeth were unusually large and long, the eyes deep-set and amazingly level, the face anamorphic—which latter fact is not necessarily criminal."

"Sounds rather an ogre to me," said Manfred.

"On the contrary," Gonsalez hastened to correct the impression, "he was quite good-looking. None but a student would have noticed the irregularity of the face. Oh, no, he was most presentable."

He explained the circumstances of the meeting. He had been to a concert the night before—not that he loved music, but because he wished to study the effect of music upon certain types of people. He had returned with hieroglyphics scribbled all over his programme, and had sat up half the night elaborating his notes.

"He is the son of Professor Tableman. He is not on good terms with his father, who apparently disapproves of his choice of *fiancée*, and he loathes his cousin," added Gonsalez simply.

Manfred laughed aloud.

"You amusing person! And did he tell you all this of his own free will, or did you hypnotize him and extract the information? You haven't asked me what I did last night."

Gonsalez was lighting a cigarette slowly and thoughtfully.

"He is nearly two metres—to be exact, six feet two inches—in height, powerfully built, with shoulders like that!" He held the cigarette in one hand and the burning match in the other to indicate the breadth of the young man. "He has big, strong hands and plays football for the United Hospitals. I beg your pardon, Manfred; where *were* you last night?"

"At Scotland Yard," said Manfred; but if he expected to produce a sensation he was to be disappointed. Probably knowing his Leon, he anticipated no such result.

"An interesting building," said Gonsalez. "The architect should have turned the western façade southward—though its furtive entrances are in keeping with its character. You had no difficulty in making friends?"

"None. My work in connection with the Spanish Criminal Code and my monograph on Dactylology secured me admission to the chief."

MANFRED was known in London as "Señor Fuentes," an eminent writer on criminology, and in their *rôles* of Spanish scientists both men bore the most compelling of credentials from the Spanish Minister of Justice. Manfred had made his home in Spain for many years. Gonsalez was a native of that country, and the third of the famous Four—there had not been a fourth for twenty years—Poiccart, the stout and gentle, seldom left his big garden in Cordoba.

To him Gonsalez referred when he spoke.

"You must write and tell our dear friend Poiccart," he said. "He will be interested. I had a letter from him this morning. Two new litters of little pigs have come to bless his establishment, and his orange trees are in blossom."

He chuckled to himself, and then suddenly became serious.

"They took you to their bosom, these policemen?"

Manfred nodded.

"They were very kind and charming. We are lunching with one of the Assistant Commissioners, Mr. Reginald Fare, to-morrow. British police methods have improved tremendously since we were in London before, Leon. The finger-print department is a model of efficiency, and their new young men are remarkably clever."

"They will hang us yet," said the cheerful Leon.

"I think not!" replied his companion.

The lunch at the Ritz-Carlton was, for Gonsalez especially, a most pleasant function. Mr. Fare, the middle-aged Commissioner, was, in addition to being a charming gentleman, a very able scientist.

"To the habitual criminal the world is an immense prison, alternating with an immense jag," said Fare. "That isn't my description, but one a hundred years old. The habitual criminal is an easy man to deal with. It is when you come to the non-criminal classes, the murderers, the accidental embezzlers——"

"Exactly!" said Gonsalez. "Now, my contention is——"

He was not to express his view, for a footman had brought an envelope to the Commissioner, and he interrupted Gonsalez with an apology to open and read its contents.

"H'm!" he said. "That is a curious coincidence."

He looked at Manfred thoughtfully.

"You were saying the other night that you would like to watch Scotland Yard at work close at hand, and I promised you that I would give you the first opportunity which presented. Your chance has come!"

He had beckoned the waiter and paid his bill before he spoke again.

"I shall not disdain to draw upon your ripe experience," he said, "for it is possible we may need all the assistance we can get in this case."

"What is it?" asked Manfred, as the Commissioner's car threaded the traffic at Hyde Park Corner.

"A man has been found dead in extraordinary circumstances," said the Commissioner. "He holds rather a prominent position in the scientific world—a Professor Tableman—you probably know the name."

"Tableman?" said Gonsalez, his eyes opening wide. "Well, that is extraordinary! You were talking of coincidences, Mr. Fare. Now I will tell you of another."

He related his meeting with the son of the Professor on the previous night.

"Professor Tableman lives in Chelsea. Some years ago he purchased his house from an artist, and had the roomy studio converted into a laboratory. He was a lecturer in physics and chemistry at the Bloomsbury University," explained Fare, though he need not have done so, for Manfred recalled the name; "and he was also a man of considerable means.

"I knew the Professor, and dined with him about a month ago," continued Fare. "He had had some trouble with his son. Tableman was an arbitrary, unyielding old man, one of those types of Christians who worship the historical figures of the Old Testament but never seem to get to the second book."

THEY arrived at their desination, and a detective who was waiting for them conducted the Commissioner along a covered passage-way running by the side of the house, and up a flight of steps directly into the studio. There was nothing unusual about the room save that it was very light, for one of the walls was a huge window, and the sloping roof was also of glass. Broad benches ran the length of two walls, and a big table occupied the centre of the room, all these being covered with scientific apparatus, whilst two long shelves above the benches were filled with bottles and jars, apparently containing chemicals.

A sad-faced, good-looking young man rose from a chair as they entered.

"I am John Munsey," he said, "the Professor's nephew. You remember me, Mr. Fare? I used to assist my uncle in his experiments."

Fare nodded. His eyes were occupied with the figure that lay upon the ground, between table and bench.

"I have not moved the Professor," said the young man. "The detectives who came moved him slightly, to assist the doctor in making his examination, but he has been left practically where he fell."

The body was that of an old man, tall and spare, and on the grey face was an unmistakable look of agony and terror.

"It looks like a case of strangling," said Fare. "Has any rope or cord been found?"

"No, sir," replied the young man. "That was the view which the detectives reached, and we made a very thorough search of the laboratory."

Gonsalez was kneeling by the body, looking with dispassionate interest at the lean neck. About the throat was a band of blue about four inches deep, and he thought at first that it was a material bandage of some diaphanous stuff, but on close inspection he saw that it was merely the discoloration of the skin. Then his keen eyes rose to the table, near where the Professor fell.

"What is that?" he asked. He pointed to a small green bottle by the side of which was an empty glass.

"It is a bottle of *crème de menthe*," said the youth; "my uncle took a glass usually before retiring."

"May I?" asked Leon, and Fare nodded.

Gonsalez picked up the glass and smelt it, then held it to the light.

"This glass was not used for liqueur last night, so he was killed before he drank," the Commissioner said. "I'd like to hear the whole story from you, Mr. Munsey. You sleep on the premises, I presume?"

After giving a few instructions to the detectives, the Commissioner followed the young man into a room which was evidently the late Professor's library.

"I have been my uncle's assistant and secretary for three years," he said, "and we have always been on the most affectionate terms. It was my uncle's practice to spend the morning in his library, the whole of the afternoon either in his laboratory or at his office at the University, and he invariably spent the hours between dinner and bedtime working at his experiments."

"Did he dine at home?" asked Fare.

"Invariably," replied Mr. Munsey, "unless he had an evening lecture or there was a meeting of one of the societies with which he was connected; and in that case he dined at the Royal Societies' Club in St. James's Street.

"My uncle, as you probably know, Mr. Fare, has had a serious disagreement with his son, Stephen Tableman, and my cousin and very good friend. I have done my best to reconcile them, and when, twelve months

ago, my uncle sent for me in this very room and told me that he had altered his will and left the whole of his property to me and had cut his son entirely from his inheritance, I was greatly distressed. I went immediately to Stephen and begged him to lose no time in reconciling himself with the old man. Stephen just laughed and said he didn't care about the Professor's money, and that, sooner than give up Miss Faber—it was about his engagement that the quarrel occurred—he would cheerfully live on the small sum of money which his mother left him. I came back and saw the Professor and begged him to restore Stephen to his will. I admit," he half smiled, "that I expected and would appreciate a small legacy. I am following the same scientific course as the Professor followed in his early days, and I have ambitions to carry on his work. But the Professor would have none of my suggestion. He raved and stormed at me, and I thought it would be discreet to drop the subject, which I did. Nevertheless, I lost no opportunity of putting in a word for Stephen, and last week, when the Professor was in an unusually amiable frame of mind, I raised the whole question again and he agreed to see Stephen. They met in the laboratory; I was not present, but I believe that there was a terrible row. When I came in, Stephen had gone, and Mr. Tableman was livid with rage. Apparently, he had again insisted upon Stephen giving up his *fiancée*, and Stephen had refused point-blank."

"HOW did Stephen arrive at the laboratory?" asked Gonsalez. "May I ask that question, Mr. Fare?"

The Commissioner nodded.

"He entered by the side passage. Very few people who come to the house on purely scientific business enter the house."

"Then access to the laboratory is possible at all hours?"

"Until the very last thing at night, when the gate is locked," said the young man. "You see, uncle used to take a little constitutional before going to bed, and he preferred using that entrance."

"Was the gate locked last night?"

John Munsey shook his head.

"No," he said, quietly. "That was one of the first things I investigated. The gate was unfastened and ajar. It is not so much of a gate as an iron grill, as you probably observed."

"Go on," nodded Mr. Fare.

"Well, the Professor gradually cooled down, and for two or three days he was very thoughtful, and, I thought, a little sad. On Monday—what is to-day? Thursday?—yes, it was on Monday, he said to me: 'John, let's have a little talk about Steve. Do you think I have treated him very badly?' 'I think you were rather unreasonable, uncle,' I said. 'Perhaps I was,' he replied. 'She must be a very fine girl for Stephen to risk poverty for her sake.' That was the opportunity I had been praying for, and I think I urged Stephen's case with an eloquence which he would have commended. The upshot of it was that the old man weakened and sent a wire to Stephen, asking him to see him last night. It must have been a struggle for the Professor to have got over his objection to Miss Faber; he was a fanatic on the question of heredity——"

"Heredity?" interrupted Manfred, quickly. "What was wrong with Miss Faber?"

"I don't know," shrugged the other; "but the Professor had heard rumours that her father had died in an inebriates' home. I believe those rumours were baseless."

"What happened last night?" asked Fare.

"I understand that Stephen came," said Munsey. "I kept carefully out of the way; in fact, I spent my time in my room, writing off some arrears of correspondence. I came downstairs about half-past eleven, but the Professor had not returned. Looking from this window you can see the wall of the laboratory, and as the lights were still on, I thought that the Professor's conversation had been protracted, and, hoping that the best results might come from this interview I went to bed. It was earlier than I go as a rule, but it was quite usual for me to go to bed even without saying good night to the Professor.

"I was awakened at eight in the morning by the housekeeper, who told me that the Professor was not in his room. Here, again, this was not an unusual circumstance. Sometimes the Professor would work very late in the laboratory and then throw himself into an arm-chair and go off to sleep. It was a habit about which I had remonstrated as plainly as I dared; but he was not a man who bore criticism with equanimity.

"I got into my dressing-gown and my slippers, and went along to the laboratory, which is reached, as you know, by the way we came in here. It was then that I discovered him on the floor, and he was quite dead."

"Was the door of the laboratory open?" asked Gonsalez.

"It was ajar."

"And the gate also was ajar?"

Munsey nodded.

"You heard no sound of quarrelling?"

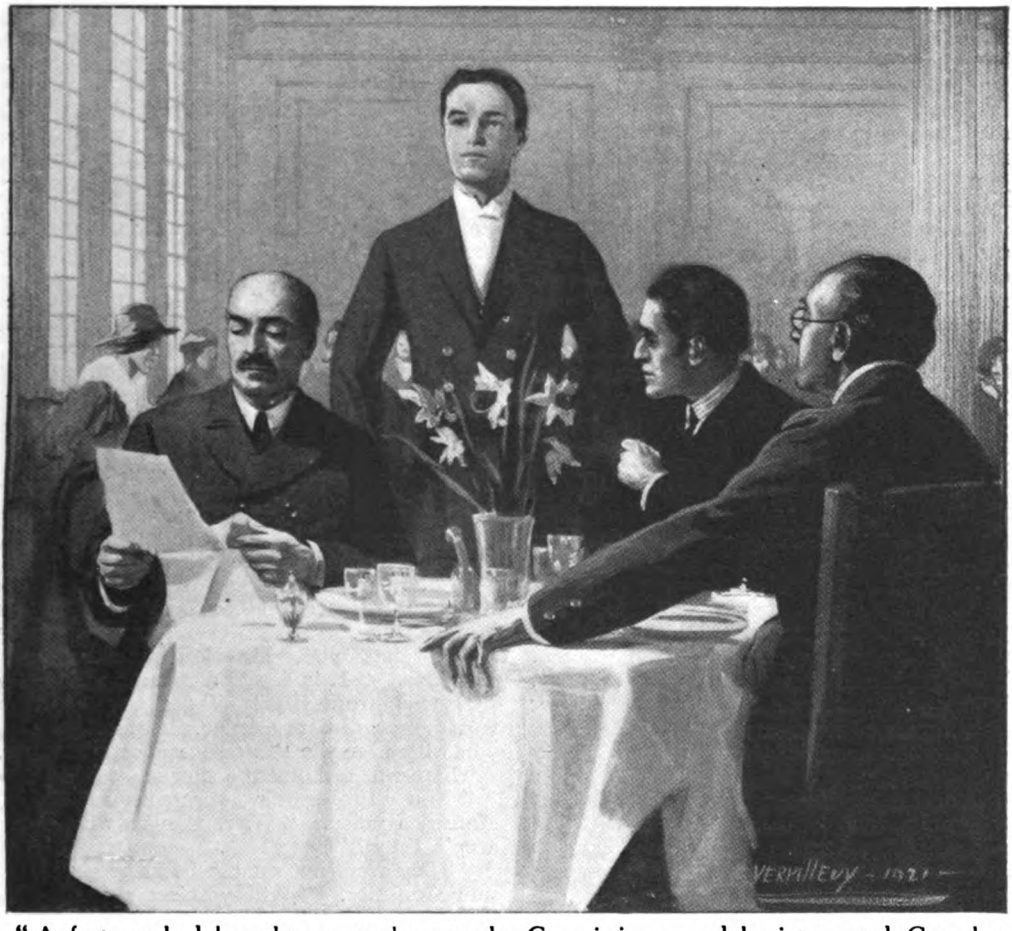
"None."

There was a knock, and Munsey walked to the door.

"It is Stephen," he said, and a second later Stephen Tableman, escorted by two

detectives, came into the room. His big face was pale, and when he greeted his cousin with a little smile, Manfred saw the extraordinary "canines," big and cruel-looking. The other teeth were of normal size, but these pointed fangs were notably abnormal.

Stephen Tableman was a young giant, and,



"A footman had brought an envelope to the Commissioner, and he interrupted Gonsalez to read its contents. 'H'm!' he said. 'That is a curious coincidence.'"

observing those great hands of his, Manfred bit his lip thoughtfully.

"You have heard the sad news, Mr. Tableman?"

"Yes, sir," said Stephen, in a shaking voice. "Can I see my father?"

"In a little time," said Fare, and his voice was hard. "I want you to tell me when you saw your father last."

"I saw him alive last night," said Stephen Tableman, quickly. "I came by appointment to the laboratory, and we had a long talk."

"How long were you there with him?"

"About two hours, as near as I can guess."

"Was the conversation of a friendly character?"

"Very," said Stephen, emphatically. "For the first time since over a year ago"—he hesitated—"we discussed a certain subject rationally."

"The subject being your *fiancée*, Miss Faber?"

"That was the subject, Mr. Fare," Stephen replied, quietly.

"Did you discuss any other matters?"

Stephen hesitated.

"We discussed money," he said. "My father cut off my allowance, and I have been rather short; in fact, I have been overdrawn at my bank, and he promised to make that right, and also spoke about—the future."

"About his will?"

"Yes, sir; he spoke about altering his

will." He looked across at Munsey, and again he smiled. "My cousin has been a most persistent advocate, and I can't thank him half enough for his loyalty to me in those dark times," he said.

"When you left the laboratory, did you go out by the side entrance?"

Stephen nodded.

"And did you close the door behind you?"

"My father closed the door," he said. "I distinctly remember hearing the click of the lock as I was going up the alley-way."

"Can the door be opened from outside?"

"Yes," said Stephen, "there is a lock which has only one key, and that is in my father's possession. I think I am right, John?"

John Munsey nodded.

"So that, if he closed the door behind you, it could only be opened again by somebody in the laboratory—himself, for example?"

Stephen looked puzzled.

"I don't quite understand the meaning of this inquiry," he said. "The detective told me that my father has been found dead. What was the cause?"

"I think he was strangled," said Fare, quietly, and the young man took a step back.

"Strangled!" he whispered. "But he hadn't an enemy in the world."

"That we shall discover." Fare's voice was dry and business-like. "You can go now, Mr. Tableman."

AFTER a moment's hesitation the big fellow swung across the room through a door in the direction of the laboratory. He came back after an absence of a quarter of an hour, and his face was deathly white.

"Horrible, horrible!" he muttered. "My poor father!"

"You are on the way to being a doctor, Mr. Tableman? I believe you are at the Middlesex Hospital," said Fare. "Do you agree with me that your father was strangled?"

The other nodded.

"It looks that way," he said, speaking with difficulty. "I couldn't conduct an examination as if he had been—somebody else, but it looks that way."

The two men walked back to their lodgings.

"You observed the canines?" asked Leon, with quiet triumph, after a while.

"I observed, too, his obvious distress," said Manfred, and Leon chuckled.

"It is evident that you have not read friend Mantegazza's admirable monograph on the 'Physiology of Pain,'" he said, smugly—Leon was delightfully smug at times—"nor examined his most admirable tables on the 'Synonyms of Expression,' or otherwise you would be aware that the expression of sorrow is undistinguishable from the expression of remorse."

Manfred looked down at his friend with that quiet smile of his.

"Anybody who did not know you, Leon, would say that you were convinced that Professor Tableman was strangled by his son."

'After a heated quarrel," said Gonsalez, complacently.

"When young Tableman had gone, you inspected the laboratory. Did you discover anything?"

"Nothing more than I expected to find," said Gonsalez. "The inspection was superfluous, I admit, for I knew exactly how the murder was committed—for murder it was—the moment I came into the laboratory and saw the thermos flask and the pad of cotton-wool."

Suddenly he frowned and stopped dead.

"*Santa Miranda!*" he ejaculated. Gonsalez always swore by this non-existent saint. "I had forgotten!"

He looked up and down the street.

"There is a place whence we can telephone," he said. "Will you come with me, or shall I leave you here?"

"I am consumed with curiosity," said Manfred.

They went into the shop, and Gonsalez gave a number. Manfred did not ask him how he knew it, because he too had read the number which was written on the telephone disc that stood on the late Professor's table.

"Is that you, Mr. Munsey?" asked Gonsalez. "It is I. You remember I have just come from you? Yes, I thought you would recognize my voice. I want to ask you where are the Professor's spectacles."

There was a moment's silence.

"The Professor's spectacles?" said Munsey's voice. "Why, they're with him, aren't they?"

"They were not on the body or near it," said Gonsalez. "Will you see if they are in his room? I'll hold the line."

He waited, humming a little aria, and presently he directed his attention again to the instrument.

"In his bedroom, were they? Thank you very much."

He hung up the receiver. He did not explain the conversation to Manfred, nor did Manfred expect him to, for Leon Gonsalez dearly loved a mystery. All Manfred permitted himself to say was:—

"Canine teeth!"

And this seemed to amuse him very much.

When Gonsalez came to breakfast the next morning, the waiter informed him that Manfred had gone out early. George came in about ten minutes after the other had

commenced breakfast, and Leon Gonsalez looked up.

"You puzzle me when your face is so mask-like, George," he said. "I don't know whether you're particularly amused or particularly depressed."

"A little of the one and a little of the other," said Manfred, sitting down to breakfast. "I have been to Fleet Street to examine the files of the sporting Press."

"The sporting Press?" repeated Gonsalez, staring at him, and Manfred nodded.

"Incidentally, I met Fare. No trace of poison has been found in the body, and no other sign of violence. They are arresting Stephen Tableman to-day."

"I was afraid of that," said Gonsalez, gravely. "But why the sporting Press, George?"

Manfred did not answer the question, but went on:—

"Fare is quite certain that the murder was committed by Stephen Tableman. His theory is that there was a quarrel and that the young man lost his temper and choked his father. Apparently, the examination of the body proved that extraordinary violence must have been used. Every blood vessel in the neck is congested. Fare also told me that at first the doctor suspected poison, but there is no sign of any drug to be discovered, and the doctors say that the drug that would cause that death with such symptoms is unknown. It makes it worse for Stephen Tableman because for the past few months he has been concentrating his studies upon obscure poisons."

Gonsalez stretched back in his chair, his hands in his pockets.

"Well, whether he committed that murder or not," he said after a while, "he is certain to commit a murder sooner or later. I remember once a doctor in Barcelona who had such teeth. He was a devout Christian, a popular man, a bachelor, and had plenty of money, and there seemed no reason in the world why he should murder anybody, and yet he did. He murdered another doctor who threatened to expose some error he made in an operation. I tell you, George, with teeth like that——" He paused and frowned thoughtfully. "My dear George," he said, "I am going to ask Fare if he will allow me the privilege of spending a few hours alone in Professor Tableman's laboratory."

"WHY on earth——" began Manfred, and checked himself. "Why, of course, you have a reason, Leon. As a rule I find no difficulty in solving such mysteries as these. But in this case I am puzzled, though I have confidence that you have already unravelled what mystery there is. There are certain features about the business which are particularly baffling. Why should the old man be wearing thick gloves?"

Gonsalez sprang to his feet, his eyes blazing.

"What a fool! What a fool!" he almost shouted. "I didn't see those. Are you sure, George?" he asked, eagerly. "He had thick gloves? Are you certain?"

Manfred nodded, smiling his surprise at the other's perturbation.

"That's it!" Gonsalez snapped his finger. "I knew there was some error in my calculations! Thick woollen gloves, weren't they?" He became suddenly thoughtful. "Now, I wonder how the devil he induced the old man to put 'em on?" he said, half to himself.

The request to Mr. Fare was granted, and the two men went together to the laboratory. John Munsey was waiting for them.

"I discovered those spectacles by my uncle's bedside," he said as soon as he saw them.

"Oh, the spectacles?" said Leon, absently. "May I see them?" He took them in his hand. "Your uncle was very short-sighted. How did they come to leave his possession, I wonder?"

"I think he went up to his bedroom to change; he usually did after dinner," explained Mr. Munsey. "And he must have left them there. He usually kept an emergency pair in the laboratory, but for some reason or other he doesn't seem to have put them on. Do you wish to be alone in the laboratory?" he asked.

"I would rather," said Leon. "Perhaps you would entertain my friend whilst I look round?"

Left alone, he locked the door that communicated between the laboratory and the house, and his first search was for the spectacles that the old man usually wore when he was working.

Characteristically enough, he went straight to the place where they were—a big galvanized ash-pan by the side of the steps leading up to the laboratory. He found them in fragments, the horn rims broken in two places, and he collected what he could and returned to the laboratory, and, laying them on the bench, he took up the telephone.

The laboratory had a direct connection with the exchange, and after five minutes' waiting Gonsalez found himself in communication with Stephen Tableman.

"Yes, sir," was the surprised reply. "My father wore his glasses throughout the interview."

"Thank you, that is all," said Gonsalez, and hung up the 'phone.

Then he went to one of the apparatus in a corner of the laboratory and worked steadily

for an hour and a half. At the end of that time he went to the telephone again. Another half-hour passed, and then he pulled from his pocket a pair of thick woollen gloves and, unlocking the door leading to the house, called Manfred.

"Ask Mr. Munsey to come," he said.

"Your friend is interested in science?" said Mr. Munsey as he accompanied Manfred along the passage.

"I think he is one of the cleverest in his own particular line," said Manfred.

He came into the laboratory ahead of Munsey, and to his surprise Gonsalez was standing near the table, holding in his hand a small liqueur glass filled with an almost colourless liquid. Almost colourless, but there was a blue tinge to it, and to Manfred's amazement a faint mist was rising from its surface.

Manfred stared at him, and then he saw that the hands of Leon Gonsalez were enclosed in thick woollen gloves.

"Have you finished?" smiled Mr. Munsey as he came from behind Manfred; and then he saw Leon and smiled no more. His face went drawn and haggard, his eyes narrowed, and Manfred heard his laboured breathing.

"Have a drink, my friend?" said Leon, pleasantly. "A beautiful drink. You'd mistake it for *crème de menthe* or any old liqueur—especially if you were a short-sighted, absent-minded old man and somebody had purloined your spectacles."

"What do you mean?" asked Munsey, hoarsely. "I—I don't understand you."

"I promise you that this drink is innocuous, that it contains no poison whatever, that it is as pure as the air you breathe," Gonsalez went on.

"Damn you!" yelled Munsey; but before he could leap at his tormentor Manfred had caught him and slung him to the ground.

"I have telephoned for the excellent Mr. Fare, and he will be here soon, and also Mr. Stephen Tableman. Ah, here they are."

There was a tap at the door.

"Will you open, please, my dear George? I do not think our young friend will move. If he does, I will throw the contents of this glass in his face."

Fare came in, followed by Stephen, and with them an officer from Scotland Yard.

"There is your prisoner, Mr. Fare," said Gonsalez. "And here is the means by which Mr. John Munsey encompassed the death of his uncle—decided thereto, I guess, by the fact that his uncle had been reconciled with Stephen Tableman, and that the will which he had so carefully manœuvred was to be altered in Stephen Tableman's favour."

"That's a lie!" gasped John Munsey. "I worked for you—you know I did, Stephen. I did my best for you."

"All part of the general scheme of deception—again I am guessing," said Gonsalez. "If I am wrong, drink this. It is the liquid your uncle drank on the night of his death."

"What is it?" demanded Fare, quickly.

"Ask him," smiled Gonsalez, nodding to the man.

John Munsey turned on his heels and walked to the door, and the police-officer who had accompanied Fare followed him.

"AND now I will tell you what it is," said Gonsalez. "It is liquid air!"

"Liquid air!" said the Commissioner. "Why, what do you mean? How can a man be poisoned with liquid air?"

"Professor Tableman was not poisoned. Liquid air is a fluid obtained by reducing the temperature of air to two hundred and seventy degrees below zero. Scientists use the liquid for experiments, and it is usually kept in a thermos flask, the mouth of which is stopped with cotton-wool; because, as you know, there would be danger of a blow-up if the air was confined."

"Good God!" gasped Tableman, in horror. "Then that blue mark about my father's throat——"

"He was frozen to death. At least his throat was frozen solid the second that liquid was taken. Your father was in the habit of drinking a liqueur before he went to bed, and there is no doubt that, after you had left, Munsey gave the Professor a glassful of liquid air, and by some means induced him to put on gloves."

"Why did he do that? Oh, of course, the cold," said Manfred.

Gonsalez nodded.

"Without gloves he would have detected immediately the stuff he was handling. What artifice Munsey used we may never know. It is certain he himself must have been wearing gloves at the time. After your father's death he then began to prepare evidence to incriminate somebody else. The Professor had probably put away his glasses preparatory to going to bed, and the murderer, like myself, overlooked the fact that the body was still wearing gloves."

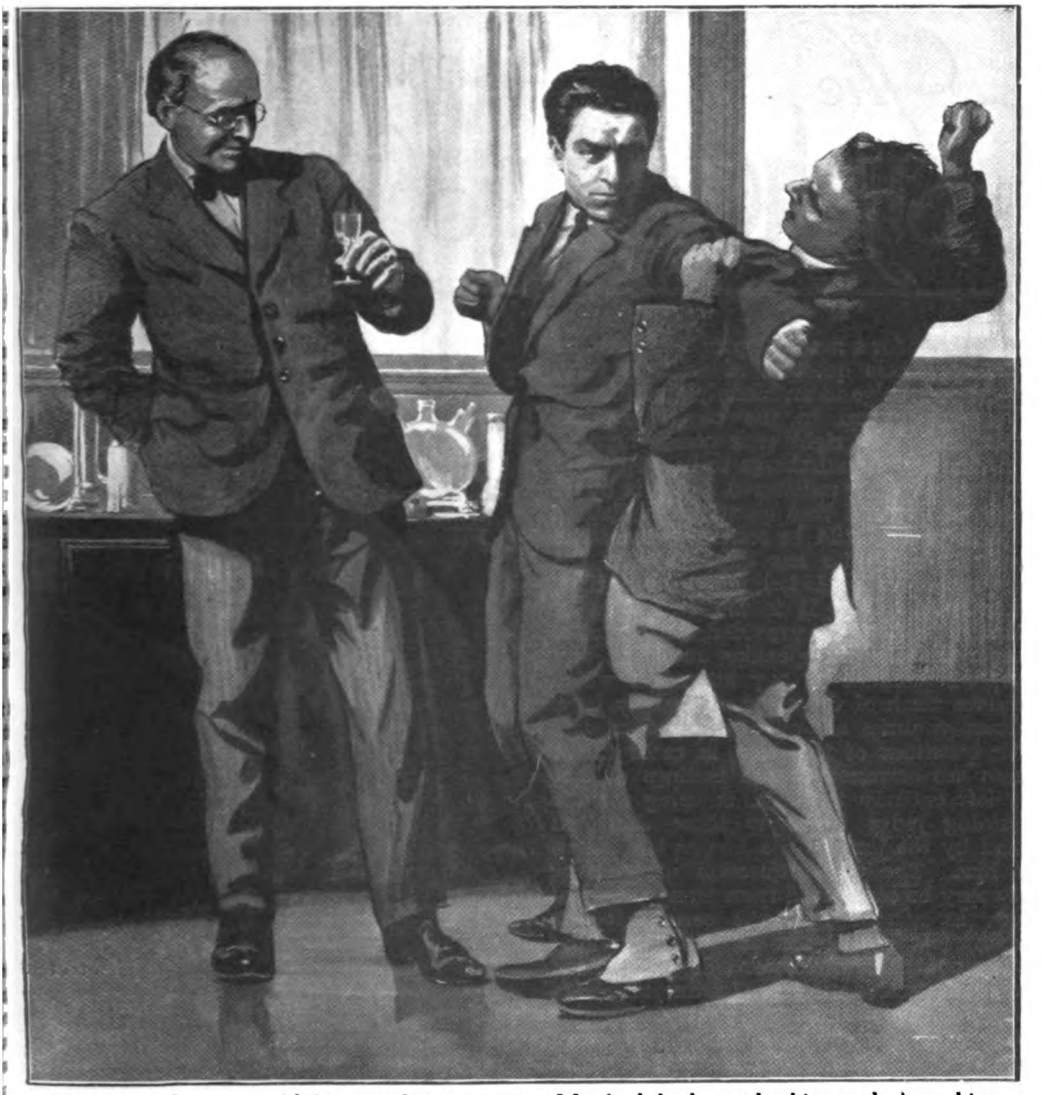
"My own theory," said Gonsalez, later, "is that Munsey has been working for years to oust his cousin from his father's affections. He probably invented the story of the dipsomaniac father of Miss Faber."

Young Tableman had come to their lodgings, and now Gonsalez had a shock. Something he said had surprised a laugh from Stephen, and Gonsalez stared at him.

"Your—your teeth?" he stammered.

Stephen flushed.

"My teeth?" he repeated, puzzled.



"Before Munsey could leap at his tormentor Manfred had caught him and slung him to the ground."

"You had two enormous canines when I saw you last," said Gonsalez. "You remember, Manfred?" he said, and he was really agitated. "I told you——"

He was interrupted by a burst of laughter from the young student.

"Oh, they were false!" he said, awkwardly. "They were knocked out at a Rugger match, and Benson, who's a fellow in our dental department and is an awfully good chap, though a pretty poor dentist, undertook to make me two to fill the deficiency. They looked terrible, didn't they? I don't wonder your noticing them. I got two new ones put in by another dentist."

"It happened on the thirteenth of September last year. I read about it in the sporting Press," said Manfred; and Gonsalez fixed him with a reproachful glance.

"You see, my dear Leon"—Manfred laid his hand on the other's shoulder—"I knew they were false, just as you knew they were canines."

When they were alone, Manfred said:—

"Talking about canines——"

"Let us talk about something else," snapped Leon.

(Another Adventure of The Four Just Men next month.)

The Psychology of the Jury

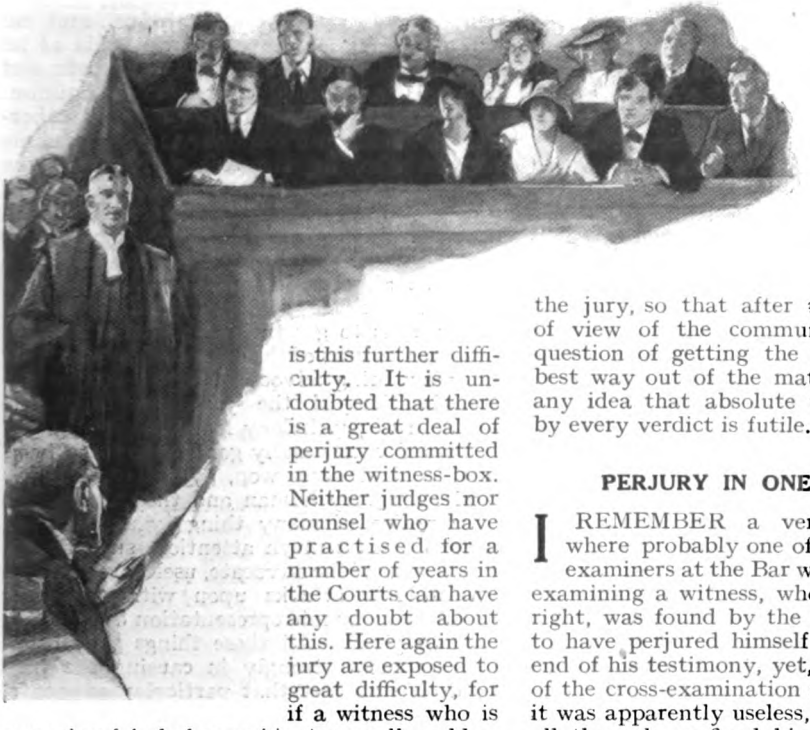
I DO not for a moment propose to discuss the whole question of trial by jury, nor indulge in an historical retrospect with regard to the origin of that institution. The right of a person accused of a serious criminal charge to be tried by a jury is practically unfettered, but it is by no means as of right that questions in dispute in civil cases should be settled in the same way. Anyone who has experience of the jury system will, I feel sure, agree that, taken as a whole, it is the best form of tribunal that can be provided, and I doubt if ever the English-speaking races, at any rate, will consent to any alteration which deprives them of the right of trial by jury. Primarily, juries are only supposed to deal with questions of fact, and, in cases where juries are empanelled, the findings of fact are left entirely to them, it being for the presiding judge to apply those facts as found by the jury to the law as laid down by him. The whole question of trial by jury may be considered from many points of view, as affecting (*a*) the community at large; (*b*) the parties to the litigation; (*c*) the advocates on either side who appear for the respective parties; (*d*) the judge who tries the case. Although theoretically this point of view ought to be the same in every case, I have but little doubt that it varies considerably.

Take the community first. The province of the jury is to ascertain, if it can, the truth of the facts that are sworn to in evidence before it. This, if it means the absolute truth, is a practical impossibility; all they can do is to form their view of the facts, and the chances that they will come to a right decision upon what are the real facts of the case are supposed to be greater because their body consists of several persons instead of only one individual. Increased interest arises when one comes to consider what it is that affects juries in forming their determination as to what those real facts are. Amongst the twelve or other number of persons who form the jury, no doubt there are some who have fixed ideas upon certain subjects, and having once formed their opinion upon that particular subject, they are not easily turned into any other direction when it comes under discussion, and so two people may come to a totally different opinion with regard to precisely the same facts, both being absolutely honest, neither being aware that he or she is swayed by any preconceived idea.

How difficult it is to arrive at the absolute truth of various statements of fact is proved day after day in our Courts. You get an accident witnessed by six people, all honest and all anxious to tell the truth, but I doubt very much if out of those six people you would be certain of getting three sworn statements which were absolutely consistent from beginning to end. Then, too, there

By

SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL K.C.



is this further difficulty. It is undoubted that there is a great deal of perjury committed in the witness-box. Neither judges nor counsel who have practised for a number of years in the Courts can have any doubt about this. Here again the jury are exposed to great difficulty, for if a witness who is swearing falsely knows his story well, and has a plausible appearance and demeanour, it is almost impossible to break that story down. Some of the most serious miscarriages of justice that have ever been brought about in our tribunals have been brought about by perjured evidence, and the most skilful counsel at the Bar cannot by cross-examination break down a perjured story, carefully prepared, unless he has material outside the case itself which enables him to generally discredit the witness and so create a presumption of untruth against him. I say him, but here the male must include the female, for some women witnesses are most untruthful, and as they are more untruthful, so they are generally (and often under shelter of their sex) more skilful in concealing that want of veracity. If a witness only knew how easy it is to defeat a hostile cross-examination by merely acting on the defensive and not attempting to launch out into counter-attack, there would be many fewer so-called brilliant pieces of cross-examination. Even the counsel who have made the greatest reputation in that line, who know that the witnesses they are cross-examining are not telling the truth, have failed utterly to demonstrate that fact to the satisfaction of the jury, so that after all, from the point of view of the community, it becomes a question of getting the best results in the best way out of the material to hand, and any idea that absolute truth is arrived at by every verdict is futile.

PERJURY IN ONE SYLLABLE.

I REMEMBER a very celebrated case where probably one of the greatest cross-examiners at the Bar was engaged in cross-examining a witness, who, if the result was right, was found by the verdict of the jury to have perjured himself from beginning to end of his testimony, yet, so far as the effect of the cross-examination appeared on paper, it was apparently useless, the witness having all through confined himself to a monosyllabic "no" to the various questions and suggestions put to him. Here the jury were, of course, unanimous, as they must be in all our Courts (unless a verdict of the majority in civil cases is taken by consent), but if the evidence of that particular case were read from the shorthand notes it would be very difficult to see how the jury could arrive at the decision which they formed. It depended entirely upon the opinion they had of the demeanour of the witness in the witness-box, and apparently they made up their mind from what they saw more than from what they heard. This is pre-eminently within the province of a jury's power, and within the scope of their duty. I do not think, therefore, that we can assume that the real interest of the community in trial by jury

is dependent upon the jury arriving at the *absolute* truth of any particular set of facts put before them, but theoretically the justification from the community's point of view for trial by jury is the probability that twelve persons are less likely to go wrong upon their view of those facts than one individual who might be called upon to decide the point.

THE JUDGE HAS THE LAST WORD.

FROM the point of view of the parties, quite different considerations come into play. The object of the party is to win the case, and so I think perhaps those who have the weaker case are more likely to desire that their case should be tried by a jury. So many considerations from the psychological point of view enter into the jury's determination of facts that in cases where on one side sentiment, or prejudice, or sympathy plays a large part, there is always supposed to be a tendency on the part of juries to decide in favour of that particular side. The most common kind of action which I have in my mind is an action against a large corporation by a person who has been injured as a result of some act or default of a servant of that corporation, for whose servant's act or default, unless it was negligent, the corporation are not liable. But I do not think the public realize how futile it very often is to try a case where the plaintiff really has no case, before a jury, in the hope that they may squeeze a verdict by sympathy, sentiment, or prejudice. After all, it must be remembered that the judge has the last word on the question of law, and many a verdict of a jury has been set aside by the presiding judge on the ground that it is bad in law. There are no juries in the Court of Appeal, although practically any appeal on a question of fact is limited to the consideration whether the jury *could* reasonably have found such a verdict upon the evidence before them. If there is any evidence upon which such a verdict could be found, no Court of Appeal will set aside that verdict merely because, had they been sitting as jurors, they would themselves have arrived at a different conclusion. So long as trial by jury exists or has existed, there will be verdicts found by those jurors with which the presiding judge will disagree. That is, however, an inseparable condition of trial by jury, and many a time have I heard a judge who has obviously and openly said things indicating that, had the decision of fact been left to him, he would have found a different verdict, yet loyally accept the verdict of the jury as right because, as he put it, they, and not he, are the judges of the facts.

THE SECRET OF WINNING VERDICTS.

FROM the point of view of the advocate, an advocate can only hope for success by identifying himself with his client and allowing nothing to interfere with the discharge of his duty to that client, so long as the discharge of that duty involves no breach of his professional or personal honour. One of the most wholesome provisions in our legal system is that which absolutely forbids an expression of any personal opinion by an advocate of the rights or wrongs of a case in which he is engaged. Any departure from this rule is always visited by the condemnation of the presiding judge, and no self-respecting advocate, knowing this as he does, would ever allow himself to be betrayed into such a personal expression of opinion. Obviously this rule must be right, as otherwise it would open the door to unscrupulous persons who, for the sake of the guineas to be earned, would be prepared to express an opinion which they did not really hold. The consideration of the psychology of the jury from the point of view of the advocate must be almost identical with that of the parties, but the real secret of successful advocacy is to get to know in what way to present the facts of the case so as to commend the view being advocated to the favourable consideration of the jury, and here the question of psychology looms large.

I wonder how many good cases have been lost, or bad cases won, by bad advocacy? Juries are very human and they are apt to take notice of many things which do not always attract much attention, such as the demeanour of the advocate, useless repetition, unjustifiable attacks upon witnesses, misrecollection or misrepresentation of evidence already given. All these things very often operate most strongly in causing the jury to decide against that particular advocate, for after all, if the famous story is true of the great forensic fight between Mr. Jones and Mr. Brown, two counsel in a country town, one of whom was well known by his local reputation and the other unknown, and the jury, instead of finding for A or B, the parties, found a verdict for their own particular friend, Mr. Jones, the advocate, then it may be probably equally true that juries have found verdicts against particular clients because they did not like the advocate appearing for that client. This may be a negation of absolute justice, but human nature being what it is, and human knowledge being limited as it is, it is hopeless under the existing conditions to expect that such results can be entirely obviated.

From the point of view of the judge, there can be no doubt that the only object

the judge has in view is to see that the jury find a verdict in accordance with what he believes to be the true view of the facts. Such a thing nowadays as a judge deliberately trying to get a verdict against his own honest belief is inconceivable, but the power of a judge over a jury is not always easy to calculate. I have known cases, and so have other advocates of experience, where a too strongly expressed view one way in a case has caused a jury to decide exactly in the opposite manner. Only quite recently in a case in which the judge's summing-up, although quite fair, was beyond question indicative in favour of one side, the jury were divided in the proportion of ten to two against the judge's view. After the case was over, one of the jurymen was heard to say that the ten who wanted to find one way would have secured a unanimous verdict, but that the two others had said that it was quite obvious that the judge thought differently, and as he probably knew more about it than they did, they were going to stand out for the judge's view. Here is an instance of the power of the judge, although his summing-up was absolutely fair.

"The only object the judge has in view is to see that the jury find a verdict in accordance with what he believes to be the true view of the facts."

AN AMUSING STORY.

MAY I digress for a moment to tell a somewhat amusing story? Many years ago I was engaged in a case for the plaintiff, in which my opponent was a well-known advocate, who now adorns the Bench. It was an action for breach of promise of marriage, and I was for the plaintiff, and I must say that everybody, including my opponent, thought that there should be a verdict for the plaintiff. The judge evidently thought so, for his summing-up left no loophole for any other verdict, but to everybody's intense astonishment the jury came back with a verdict for the defendant. Some weeks after this I happened to be playing golf, not far from London, and going into the club-house, where I was a guest, to lunch, I noticed three or four men sitting at a table whose faces were familiar to me. As I passed I heard my name mentioned, and turning round I at once recognized one of the party as a juryman in the case I have referred to. My curiosity being aroused, I stopped for a moment and asked how they found the verdict that they did. He laughed, and gave this most amusing explanation. "Well," said he, "the judge who tried the case had a reputation for forming strong views which were not always upheld by the Court of Appeal, and so when the jury retired to the jury room to consider their verdict, one of them at once said: 'Well, it is quite evident which way the judge is. Now we all know that it is six to four that the judge is wrong; why go against the odds? Let's find for the defendant.'" And they did. How is the psychology of that particular jury to be explained? There is no doubt that the issue of fact in that case was entirely for them, and I think there is hardly any doubt that their decision on the facts was wrong, and yet in this case the judge was most anxious, and took every opportunity to impress it upon them, that they should find what, for the purpose of the argument, must be admitted to be the right verdict, but yet for some extraneous reason entirely outside the case altogether they found a verdict which was theoretically unjustifiable.

The difficulty of the advocate is that he so seldom gets to know what takes place in the jury room, because, although there is no oath binding a juryman to secrecy as to the decision or the process by which it is arrived at, it would, I think, be highly inconvenient if cases were liable to be reopened upon

expressions of opinion delivered by individual jurymen after the case had been decided. Most judges have in their time been advocates, and they must have the advocate's experience and know what is most likely to influence the jury, and it is noticeable how some judges rarely, if ever, fail to get a jury to find a verdict in accordance with the view they have obviously formed of the case.

THE JURYMAN AND THE "SPORTING TIMES."

ONE more instance of this psychology, from actual fact. In the very early days of my career at the Bar I was engaged as junior in the defence of a woman charged for murder of a new-born child. The real question to be decided by the jury was a medical one as to the cause of death, and on this some very strong evidence was given by a well-known surgeon who was a witness for the Treasury. If his evidence was accepted, a hostile verdict of the jury was almost inevitable, in spite of the very strongest sympathy which existed for the unfortunate woman. The case was tried before one of the most humane judges who ever adorned the English Bench, and the humanity of his summing-up had a great deal, no doubt, to do with the verdict of acquittal which my leader, by his brilliant speech, so triumphantly secured. I happened to know the foreman of the jury well, and, his professional vocation being that of an undertaker, I did not think he was likely to be moved by sentiment, so I asked him one day soon after the trial how he got over the evidence of the medical man I referred to. "Oh!" said he, "that was the man who read the *Sporting Times* in Court whilst the case was going on, and I would not believe a man on his oath who read a paper like that." So again, you see, the extraneous view of a dominating member of a jury came into play to discredit the evidence of one of the most reliable witnesses who ever appeared as an expert for the Treasury.

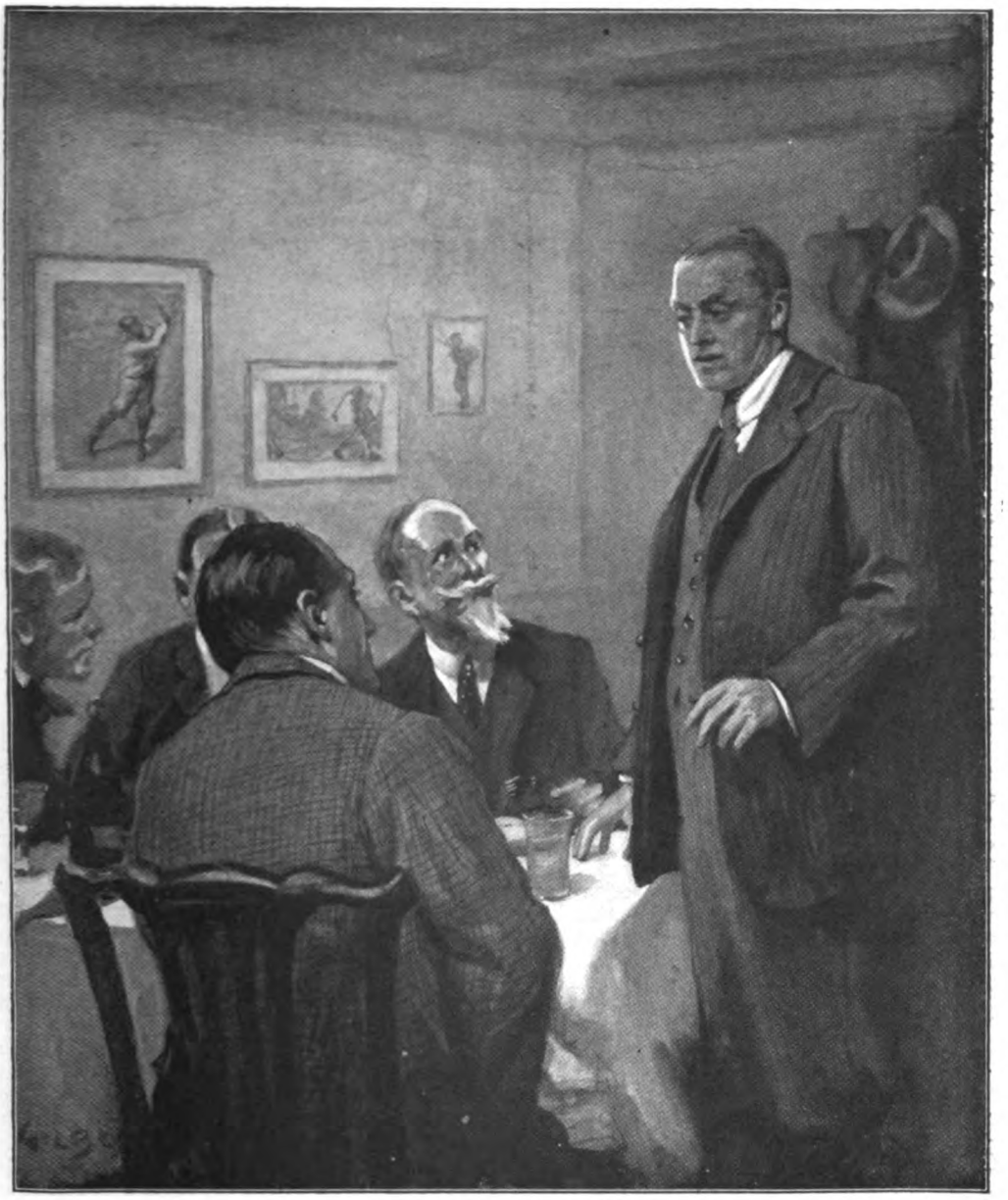
I remember telling this story to Mr. John Corlett soon after it occurred, and it caused him the most intense amusement, he being, as some of my readers may not be aware, the proprietor and editor of the *Sporting Times*, which had a large circulation in spite of, or because of, the somewhat racy character of its contents.

How, then, are you going to eliminate the idiosyncrasies of jurymen from their verdicts? And now that persons of both sexes are eligible to serve on juries, I am afraid the danger of individual opinion colouring the common decision will be much increased. Personally, I welcome the appearance of women on the jury, and so long as the provisions of the Act are carried out and the discretion of the Court is exercised in preventing women being called upon to decide cases which from the very nature of the evidence should be decided by men only, and not submitted to women for decision, I am sure that the advent of women on the jury will tend to raise the tone rather than lower the tone of their verdicts. If women insist in getting to know some of the filthy things which, alas, are known to men, the inevitable result will be to lower the status of the woman and not improve it. One thing that gives rise to thought is whether women are liable to be more influenced by the personal appearance of witnesses. I am afraid that their costume may cause more emotion and commotion than their demeanour. I doubt if the public know how important it is sometimes that witnesses should "dress the part," and I remember one case in particular where I insisted that a witness whom I believed to be telling the truth should leave his jewellery behind before he went into the witness-box, for I felt convinced that the quantity of it, and its wondrous display, created a presumption in favour of disbelief.

THE IMPORTANCE OF "DRESSING THE PART."

HERE is another story which may interest my readers, told of a well-known advocate who, alas! has been dead for thirty years. It was a case at Quarter Sessions and a young fellow was charged with stealing a five-pound note upon a racecourse. When arrested the first thing he did, according to the policeman, was to eat the note. The well-known barrister from London was taken down specially to defend him, and in the meanwhile the prisoner had been allowed out on bail. When counsel saw his client, the appearance of the latter was not calculated to impress the jury favourably with his innocence, which, however, he stoutly maintained. There were many cases for trial that day, and the learned Recorder, seeing the learned gentleman from London, asked him if he would like to have his case taken at once, but to everybody's astonishment he declined the offer and said "he would sooner have it taken last."

It was noticed, however, that he sat throughout the day in court listening to the other cases. In almost every case that was tried, before the same jury, after the prisoner had been convicted, a prison warder in uniform would go into the witness-box and read out a long string of previous convictions against that particular prisoner. Of course, no previous conviction can, as a general rule, be proved against an accused person until after the verdict of the jury; the reason of this is obvious, in order that the jury



"As I passed I heard my name mentioned, and turning round I at once recognized one of the party as a juryman in the case referred to."

should not be prejudiced against the prisoner by the knowledge of that previous conviction. Well, after all the cases were over, our friend's case was called on, and there appeared in the dock a neatly-dressed and most respectable young man, who was indicted for feloniously stealing and receiving a five-pound note, to which he pleaded "Not guilty." The case proceeded, the evidence was given, and a very well-known member of the Bar appeared for the prosecution. Counsel for the defence asked very few questions. In those days the prisoner could not be called as a witness, and no witnesses were called for the defence, so the counsel for the prosecution summed the case up before the prisoner's counsel spoke, who then, rising to his feet, proceeded to

address the jury somewhat in this way: "Gentlemen of the jury, I dare say you have noticed that in every case that has been tried before you to-day, or almost every case, in which you have found your verdict of 'Guilty,' you have had the satisfaction of seeing in that witness-box a man in uniform, who has told you of the lurid past of the man you have just convicted. Now, this case is entirely different. I challenge my learned friend to contradict me when I say that this young man's reputation is unassailed and unassailable. There is no previous conviction against him, there has never been any previous charge against him. Look at him: does he look like the sort of person who would steal a five-pound note upon a racecourse and, when arrested, eat it?" With that he sat down, and the prisoner was acquitted. Here again, what was the psychology of the jury? The evidence for the prosecution, if true, was conclusive; there was no evidence called upon the other side, and yet the jury, for some reason best known to themselves, took the view that their proper verdict was a verdict of "Not guilty."

"A prison warder would read out a long string of previous convictions."

JUDGE—OR JURY?

LET me, however, say one word in discriminating between civil and criminal cases. The whole question of what is known as the "onus of proof" is a matter which is very often disregarded by the layman. In any case where the responsibility of the proof of any particular set of facts is laid upon the person putting forward that particular set of facts, it is necessary that that responsibility should be discharged by, at any rate, proving a *prima facie* case on the facts alleged; if the proof falls short, the responsibility is not discharged, and, if the responsibility is not discharged, then the jury are bound, according to our law, to find that the case is not proved. This is so in civil cases, but it is still stronger in criminal cases. One of the greatest bulwarks of criminal justice is the presumption which prevails that all persons (with some technical exceptions which I need not enumerate) accused of crime are presumed by our law to be innocent, until the jury have found a verdict of "Guilty" against them, and if the evidence which is called for the prosecution does not displace that presumption, and demonstrate the guilt of the accused person beyond any reasonable doubt (that is to say, the sort of doubt that would enter into the ordinary business relations of life), then that accused person is entitled as of right to be acquitted.

I once heard a great advocate say that if he was guilty of a crime that was charged against him he would sooner be tried by a jury than by a judge. I am not altogether sure that he was right, for I know certainly of more than one case within my own personal experience where, if the decision had been left to the judge, the accused person would have been acquitted, whereas the jury, who did not thoroughly appreciate the difficulty of deciding the question whether the onus of proof was discharged or not, in each case convicted the accused.

Trial by jury is an institution which is by no means perfect, as nothing can be perfect in this mundane world, but I for one hope that it will never be abolished, and whatever miscarriage of justice may ensue from a wrong verdict by a jury, I cannot remember, in all my professional career, a case where a person of whose innocence I was personally convinced has been convicted by the verdict of a jury in a criminal case.

I cannot say the same of cases in the civil courts, where I have often lost, and sometimes even won, verdicts which were contrary to my personal opinion of the real merits of the case.

Taken as a whole, trial by jury is a great institution, and long may it survive.

The Salvation of George Mackintosh

by P. G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD

THE young man came into the club-house and flung his bag moodily into a corner. There was a frown on his usually cheerful face, and he ordered a ginger-ale in the sort of voice which an ancient Greek would have used when asking the executioner to bring on the hemlock. He sank into a chair and stared straight in front of him.

Sunk in the recesses of his favourite settee the Oldest Member had watched him with silent sympathy.

"How did you get on?" he inquired.

"He beat me."

The Oldest Member nodded his venerable head.

"You have had a trying time, if I am not mistaken. I feared as much when I saw you go out with Pobsley. How many a young man have I seen go out with Herbert Pobsley exulting in his youth, and crawl back at eventide looking like a toad under the harrow! He talked?"

"All the time, confound it. Put me right off my stroke."

The Oldest Member sighed.

"The talking golfer is undeniably the most pronounced pest of our complex modern civilization," he said, "and the most difficult to deal with. It is a melancholy thought that the noblest of games should have produced such a scourge. I have frequently marked Herbert Pobsley in action. As the crackling of thorns under a pot. . . . He is almost as bad as poor George Mackintosh in his worst period. Did I ever tell you about George Mackintosh?"

"I don't think so."

"His," said the Sage, 'is the only case of golfing garrulity I have ever known where a permanent cure was effected. If you would care to hear about it——?"

GEORGE MACKINTOSH (said the Oldest Member), when I first knew him, was one of the most admirable young fellows I have ever met. A handsome, well-set-up man, with no vices except a tendency to use the mashie for shots which should have been made with the light iron. And as for his positive virtues, they were too numerous to mention. He never swayed his body, moved his head, or pressed. He was always ready to utter a tactful grunt when his opponent foozled. And when he himself achieved a glaring fluke, his self-reproachful click of the tongue was music to his adversary's bruised soul. But of all his virtues the one that most endeared him to me and to all thinking men was the fact that, from the start of a round to the finish, he never spoke a word except when absolutely compelled to do so by the exigencies of the game. And it was this man who subsequently, for a black period which lives in the memory of all his contemporaries, was known as Gabby George and became a shade less popular than the germ of Spanish Influenza. Truly, *corruptio optimi pessima!*

One of the things that sadden a man as he grows older and reviews his life is the reflection that his most devastating deeds were generally the ones which he did with the best motives. The thought is disheartening. I can honestly say that, when George Mackintosh came to me and told me his troubles, my sole desire was to ameliorate his lot.

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That I might be starting on the downward path a man whom I liked and respected never once occurred to me.

I was reading my "Braid on the Push-Shot" one night after dinner when George Mackintosh came in. I could see at once that there was something on his mind, but what this could be I was at a loss to imagine, for I had been playing with him myself all the afternoon and he had done an eighty-one and a seventy-nine. And, as I had not left the links till dusk was beginning to fall, it was practically impossible that he could have gone out again and done badly. The idea of financial trouble seemed equally out of the question. George had a good job with the old-established legal firm of Peabody, Peabody, Peabody, Peabody, Cootes, Toots, and Peabody. The third alternative, that he might be in love, I rejected at once. In all the time I had known him I had never seen a sign that George Mackintosh gave a thought to the opposite sex.

Yet this, bizarre as it seemed, was the true solution. Scarcely had he seated himself and lit a cigar when he blurted out his confession.

"What would you do in a case like this?" he said.

"Like what?"

"Well——" He choked, and a rich blush permeated his surface. "Well, it seems a silly thing to say and all that, but I'm in love!"

"I see no objection to that," I said. "If she is worthy of you."

"Worthy!" He gasped. "She would be worthy of Harry Vardon!"

"Indeed?"

"She won the Ladies' Medal last month."

"You are in love with Celia Tennant?"

"Of course I am. I've got eyes, haven't I? Who else is there that any sane man could possibly be in love with? That," he went on, moodily, "is the whole trouble. There's a field of about twenty-nine, and I should think my place in the betting is about thirty-three to one."

"I cannot agree with you there," I said. "You have every advantage, it appears to me. You are young, amiable, good-looking, comfortably off, scratch——"

"But I can't talk, confound it!" he burst out. "And how is a man to get anywhere at this sort of game without talking?"

"You are talking perfectly fluently now."

"Yes, to you. But put me in front of Celia Tennant, and I simply make a sort of gurgling noise like a sheep with the botts. It kills my chances stone dead. You know these other men. I can give Claude Mainwaring a third and beat him. I can give Eustace Brinkley a stroke a hole and simply trample on his corpse. But when it comes to talking to a girl, I'm not in their class."

"You must not be diffident."

"But I *am* diffident. What's the good of saying I mustn't be diffident when I'm the man who wrote the words and music, when Diffidence is my middle name and my telegraphic address? I can't help being diffident."

"Surely you could overcome it?"

"But how? It was in the hope that you might be able to suggest something that I came round to-night."

And this was where I did the fatal thing. It happened that, just before I took up "Braid on the Push-Shot," I had been dipping into the current number of a magazine, and one of the advertisements, I chanced to remember, might have been framed with a special eye to George's unfortunate case. It was that one, which I have no doubt you have seen, which treats of "How to Become a Convincing Talker." I picked up this magazine now and handed it to George.

He studied it for a few minutes in thoughtful silence. He looked at the picture of the man who had taken the course being fawned upon by lovely women while the man who had let this opportunity slip stood outside the group gazing with a wistful envy.

"They never do that to me," said George.

"Do what, my boy?"

"Cluster round, clinging cooingly."

"I gather from the letterpress that they will if you write for the booklet."

"You think there is really something in it?"

"I see no reason why eloquence should not be taught by mail. One seems to be able to acquire every other desirable quality in that manner nowadays."

"I might try it. After all, it's not expensive. There's no doubt about it," he murmured, returning to his perusal, "that fellow does look popular. Of course, the evening dress may have something to do with it."

"Not at all. The other man, you will notice, is also wearing evening dress, and yet he is merely among those on the outskirts. It is simply a question of writing for the booklet."

"Sent post free."

"Sent, as you say, post free."

"I've a good mind to try it."

"I see no reason why you should not."

"I will, by Duncan!" He tore the page out of the magazine and put it in his pocket. "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give this thing a trial for a week or two, and at the end of that time I'll go to the boss and see how he reacts when I ask for a rise of salary. If he crawls, it'll show there's something in this. If he flings me out, it will prove the thing's no good."

We left it at that, and I am bound to say —owing, no doubt, to my not having written for the booklet of the Memory Training Course advertised on the adjoining page of the magazine—the matter slipped from my mind. When therefore, a few weeks later, I received a telegram from young Mackintosh which ran :—

Worked like magic,

I confess I was intensely puzzled. It was only a quarter of an hour before George himself arrived that I solved the problem of its meaning.

"SO the boss crawled ?" I said, as he came in.

He gave a light, confident laugh. I had not seen him, as I say, for some time, and I was struck by the alteration in his appearance. In what exactly this alteration consisted I could not at first have said : but gradually it began to impress itself on me that his eye was brighter, his jaw squarer, his carriage a trifle more upright than it had been. But it was his eye that struck me most forcibly. The George Mackintosh I had known had had a pleasing gaze, but, though frank and agreeable, it had never been more dynamic than a poached egg. This new George had an eye that was a combination of a gimlet and a searchlight. Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, I imagine, must have been somewhat similarly equipped. The Ancient Mariner stopped a wedding guest on his way to a wedding ; George Mackintosh gave me the impression that he could have stopped the Cornish Riviera express on its way to Penzance. Self-confidence—aye, and more than self-confidence—a sort of sinful, overbearing swank seemed to exude from his very pores. Even at this early stage of the proceedings I was not sure that I altogether approved of the change.

"Crawled ?" he said. "Well, he didn't actually lick my boots, because I saw him coming and side-stepped : but he did everything short of that. I hadn't been talking an hour when——"

"An hour !" I gasped. "Did you talk for an hour ?"

"Certainly. You wouldn't have had me be abrupt, would you ? I went into his private office and found him alone. I think at first he would have been just as well pleased if I had retired. In fact he said as much. But I soon adjusted that outlook. I took a seat and a cigarette, and then I started to sketch out for him the history of my connection with the firm. He began to wilt before the end of the first ten minutes. At the quarter of an hour mark he was looking at me like a lost dog that's just found its owner. By the half-hour he was making little bleating noises and massaging my coat-sleeve. And when, after perhaps an hour and a half, I came to my peroration and suggested a rise, he choked back a sob, gave me double what I had asked, and invited me to dine at his club next Tuesday. I'm a little sorry now I cut the thing so short. A few minutes more, and I fancy he would have given me his sock-suspenders and made over his life-insurance in my favour."

"Well," I said, as soon as I could speak, for I was finding my young friend a trifle overpowering, "this is most satisfactory."

"So-so," said George. "Not un-so-so. A man wants an addition to his income when he is going to get married."

"Ah !" I said. "That, of course, will be the real test."

"What do you mean ?"

"Why, when you propose to Celia Tennant. You remember you were saying when we spoke of this before——"

"Oh, that !" said George, carelessly. "I've arranged all that."

"What !"

"Oh, yes. On my way up from the station. I looked in on Celia about an hour ago, and it's all settled."

"Amazing !"

"Well, I don't know. I just put the thing to her, and she seemed to see it."

"I congratulate you. So now, like Alexander——"

"Alexander who ?"

"If you will permit me to finish. Like Alexander, you have no more worlds to conquer."

"Well, I don't know so much about that," said George. "The way it looks to me is that I'm just starting. This eloquence is a thing that rather grows on one."

"You must not let it interfere with your golf."

He gave a laugh which turned my blood cold.

"Golf !" he said. "After all, what is golf ? Just pushing a small ball into a hole. A child could do it. Indeed, children have done it with great success. I see an infant of fourteen has just won some sort of championship. Could that stripling convulse a roomful of banqueters, as I have done ? I think not ! To sway your fellow-men with a word, to hold them with a gesture—that is the real salt of life. I don't suppose I shall play much more golf now. I'm making arrangements for a lecturing tour, and I'm booked up for fifteen lunches already."

Those were his words. A man who had once done the lake hole in one. A man whom the committee were grooming for the amateur championship. I am no weakling, but I confess they sent a chill shiver down my spine.

GEORGE MACKINTOSH did not, I am glad to say, carry out his mad project to the letter. He did not altogether sever himself from golf. He was still to be seen occasionally on the links. But now—and I know of nothing more tragic that can befall a man—he found himself gradually shunned, he who in the days of his sanity had been besieged with more offers of games than he could manage to accept. Men simply would not stand his incessant flow of talk. One by one they dropped off, until the only person he could find to go round with him was old Major Moseby, whose hearing completely petered out as long ago as the year '98. And, of course, Celia Tennant would play with him occasionally: but it seemed to me that even she, greatly as no doubt she loved him, was beginning to crack under the strain.

So surely had I read the pallor of her face and the wild look of dumb agony in her eyes that I was not surprised when, as I sat one morning in my garden reading "Ray On Taking Turf," my man announced her name.

She sat down on the grass beside my chair and looked up at my face in silent pain. We had known each other so long that I knew that it was not my face that pained her, but rather some unspoken *malaise* of the soul. I waited for her to speak, and suddenly she burst out impetuously as though she could hold back her sorrow no longer.

"Oh, I can't stand it! I can't stand it!"

"You mean——?" I said, though I knew only too well.

"This horrible obsession of poor George's," she cried, passionately. "I don't think he has stopped talking once since we have been engaged."

"He *is* chatty," I agreed. Has he told you the story about the Irishman?"

"Half-a-dozen times. And the one about the Swede oftener than that. But I would not mind an occasional anecdote. Women have to learn to bear anecdotes from the men they love. It is the curse of Eve. It is his incessant easy flow of chatter on all topics that is undermining even my devotion."

"But, surely, when he proposed to you, he must have given you an inkling of the truth. He only hinted at it when he spoke to me, but I gather that he was eloquent."

"When he proposed," said Celia, dreamily, "he was wonderful. He spoke for twenty minutes without stopping. He said I was the essence of his every hope, the tree on which the fruit of his life grew; his Present, his Future, his Past—oh, and all that sort of thing. If he would only confine his conversation now to remarks of a similar nature, I could listen to him all day long. But he doesn't. He talks politics and statistics and philosophy, and—oh, and everything. He makes my head ache."

"And your heart also, I fear," I said, gravely.

"I love him!" she replied, simply. "In spite of everything, I love him dearly. But what to do? What to do? I have an awful fear that, when we are getting married, instead of answering 'I will,' he will go into the pulpit and deliver an address on 'Marriage Ceremonies of All Ages.' The world to him is a vast lecture-platform. He looks on life as one long after-dinner, with himself as the principal speaker of the evening. It is breaking my heart. I see him shunned by his former friends. Shunned! They run a mile when they see him coming. The mere sound of his voice outside the club-house is enough to send brave men diving for safety beneath the sofas. Can you wonder that I am in despair? What have I to live for?"

"There is always golf."

"Yes, there is always golf," she whispered bravely.

"Come and have a round this afternoon."

"I had promised to go for a walk"—she shuddered, then pulled herself together—"for a walk with George."

I hesitated for a moment.

"Bring him along," I said, and patted her hand. "It may be that together we shall find an opportunity of reasoning with him."

She shook her head.

"You can't reason with George. He never stops talking long enough to give you time."

"Nevertheless, there is no harm in trying. I have an idea that this malady of his is not permanent and incurable. The very violence with which the germ of loquacity has attacked him gives me hope. You must remember that before this seizure he was rather a noticeably silent man. Sometimes I think that it is just Nature's way of restoring the average, and that soon the fever may burn itself out. Or it may be that a sudden shock—— At any rate, have courage."

"I will try to be brave."

"Capital! At half-past two on the first tee, then."

THE steady drone of a baritone voice as I alighted from my car and approached the first tee told me that George had not forgotten the tryst. He was sitting on the stone seat under the chestnut tree, speaking a few well-chosen words on the Labour Movement.

"To what conclusion, then, do we come?"

"Men simply would not stand his incessant flow of talk. One by one they dropped off, until the only person he could find to go round with him was old Major Moseby, whose hearing completely petered out as long ago as the year '98."

he was saying. "We come to the foregone and inevitable conclusion that——"

"Good afternoon, George," I said.

He nodded briefly, but without verbal salutation. He seemed to regard my remark as he would have regarded the unmannerly heckling of someone at the back of the hall. He proceeded evenly with his speech, and was still talking when Celia addressed her ball and drove off. Her drive, coinciding with a sharp rhetorical question from George, wavered in mid-air, and the ball trickled off into the rough half-way down the hill. I can see the poor girl's tortured face even now. But she breathed no word of reproach. Such is the miracle of woman's love.

"Where you went wrong there," said George, breaking off his remarks on Labour, "was that you have not studied the dynamics of golf sufficiently. You did not pivot properly. You allowed your left heel to point down the course when you were at the top of your swing. This makes for instability and loss of distance. The fundamental law of the dynamics of golf is that the left foot shall be solidly on the ground at the moment of impact. If you allow your heel to point down the course, it is almost impossible to bring it back in time to make the foot a solid fulcrum."

I drove, and managed to clear the rough and reach the fairway. But it was not one of my best drives. George Mackintosh, I confess, had unnerved me. The feeling he gave me resembled the self-conscious panic which I used to experience in my childhood when informed that there was One Awful Eye that watched my every movement and saw my every act. It was only the fact that poor Celia appeared even more affected by his espionage that enabled me to win the first hole in seven.

ON the way to the second tee George discoursed on the beauties of Nature, pointing out at considerable length how exquisitely the silver glitter of the lake harmonized with the vivid emerald turf near the hole and the duller green of the rough beyond it. As Celia teed up her ball, he directed her attention to the golden glory of the sand-pit to the left of the flag. It was not the spirit in which to approach the lake-hole, and I was not surprised when the unfortunate girl's ball fell with a sickening plop half-way across the water.

"Where you went wrong there," said George, "was that you made the stroke a sudden heave instead of a smooth, snappy flick of the wrists. Pressing is always bad, but with the mashie——"

"I think I will give you this hole," said Celia to me, for my shot had cleared the water and was lying on the edge of the green. "I wish I hadn't used a new ball."

"The price of golf-balls," said George, as we started to round the lake, "is a matter to which economists should give some attention. I am credibly informed that rubber at the present time is exceptionally cheap. Yet we see no decrease in the price of golf-balls, which, as I need scarcely inform you, are rubber-cored. Why should this be so? You will say that the wages of skilled labour have gone up. True. But——"

"One moment, George, while I drive," I said. For we had now arrived at the third tee.

"A curious thing, concentration," said George, "and why certain phenomena should prevent us from focusing our attention—— This brings me to the vexed question of sleep. Why is it that we are able to sleep through some vast convulsion of Nature when a dripping tap is enough to keep us awake? I am told that there were people who slumbered peacefully through the San Francisco earthquake, merely stirring drowsily from time to time to tell an imaginary person to leave it on the mat. Yet these same people——"

Celia's drive bounded into the deep ravine which yawns some fifty yards from the tee. A low moan escaped her.

"Where you went wrong there——" said George.

"I know," said Celia. "I lifted my head"

I had never heard her speak so abruptly before. Her manner, in a girl less noticeably pretty, might almost have been called snappish. George, however, did not appear to have noticed anything amiss. He filled his pipe and followed her into the ravine.

"Remarkable," he said, "how fundamental a principle of golf is this keeping the head still. You will hear professionals tell their pupils to keep their eye on the ball. Keeping the eye on the ball is only a secondary matter. What they really mean is that the head should be kept rigid, as otherwise it is impossible to——"

His voice died away. I had sliced my drive into the woods on the right, and after playing another had gone off to try to find my ball, leaving Celia and George in the ravine behind me. My last glimpse of them showed me that her ball had fallen into a stone-studded cavity in the side of the hill, and she was drawing her niblick from her bag as I passed out of sight. George's voice, blurred by distance to a monotonous murmur, followed me until I was out of earshot.

I was just about to give up the hunt for my ball in despair, when I heard Celia's voice calling to me from the edge of the undergrowth. There was a sharp note in it which startled me.

I came out, trailing a portion of some unknown shrub which had twined itself about my ankle.

"Yes?" I said, picking twigs out of my hair.

"I want your advice," said Celia.

"Certainly. What is the trouble? By the way," I said, looking round, "where is your *fiancé*?"

"I have no *fiancé*," she said, in a dull, hard voice.

"You have broken off the engagement?"

"Not exactly. And yet—well, I suppose it amounts to that."

"I don't quite understand."

"Well, the fact is," said Celia, in a burst of girlish frankness, "I rather think I've killed George."

"Killed him, eh?"

It was a solution that had not occurred to me, but now that it was presented for my inspection I could see its merits. In these days of national effort, when we are all working together to try to make our beloved land fit for heroes to live in, it was astonishing that nobody before had thought of a simple, obvious thing like killing George Mackintosh. George Mackintosh was undoubtedly better dead, but it had taken a woman's intuition to see it.

"I killed him with my niblick," said Celia.

I nodded. If the thing was to be done at all, it was unquestionably a niblick shot.

"I had just made my eleventh attempt to get out of that ravine," the girl went on, "with George talking all the time about the recent excavations in Egypt, when suddenly—you know what it is when something seems to snap——"

"I had the experience with my shoe-lace only this morning."

"Yes, it was like that. Sharp—sudden—happening all in a moment. I suppose I must have said something, for George stopped talking about Egypt and said that he was reminded by a remark of the last speaker's of a certain Irishman——"

I pressed her hand.

"Don't go on if it hurts you," I said, gently.

"Well, there is very little more to tell. He bent his head to light his pipe, and well—the temptation was too much for me. That's all."

"You were quite right."

"You really think so?"

"I certainly do. A rather similar action, under far less provocation, once made Jael the wife of Heber the most popular woman in Israel."

"I wish I could think so too," she murmured. "At the moment, you know, I was conscious of nothing but an awful elation. But—but—oh, he was such a darling before he got this dreadful affliction. I can't help thinking of G-George as he used to be."

She burst into a torrent of sobs.

"Would you care for me to view the remains?" I said.

"Perhaps it would be as well."

She led me silently into the ravine. George Mackintosh was lying on his back where he had fallen.

"There!" said Celia.

And, as she spoke, George Mackintosh gave a kind of snorting groan and sat up. Celia uttered a sharp shriek and sank on her knees before him. George blinked once or twice and looked about him dazedly.

"Save the women and children!" he cried. "I can swim!"

"Oh, George!" said Celia.

"Feeling a little better?" I asked.

"A little. How many people were hurt?"

"Hurt?"

"When the express ran into us." He cast another glance around him. "Why, how did I get here?"

"You were here all the time," I said.

"Do you mean after the roof fell in or before?"

Celia was crying quietly down the back of his neck.

"Oh, George!" she said, again.

He groped out feebly for her hand and patted it.

"Brave little woman!" he said. "Brave little woman! She stuck by me all through. Tell me—I am strong enough to bear it—what caused the explosion?"

It seemed to me a case where much unpleasant explanation might be avoided by the exercise of a little tact.

"Well, some say one thing and some another," I said. "Whether it was a spark from a cigarette——"

Celia interrupted me. The woman in her made her revolt against this well-intentioned subterfuge.

"I hit you, George!"

"Hit me?" he repeated, curiously. "What with? The Eiffel Tower?"

"With my niblick."

"You hit me with your niblick! But why?"

She hesitated. Then she faced him bravely.

"Because you wouldn't stop talking."

He gaped.

"Me!" he said. "*I* wouldn't stop talking! But I hardly talk at all. I'm noted for it."

Celia's eyes met mine in agonized inquiry. But I saw what had happened. The blow, the sudden shock, had operated on George's brain-cells in such a way as to effect a complete cure. I have not the technical know-

ledge to be able to explain it, but the facts were plain.

'Lately, my dear fellow," I assured him, " you have dropped into the habit of talking rather a good deal. Ever since we started out this afternoon you have kept up an incessant flow of conversation ! "

George Mackintosh stared at me. Then a crimson blush mantled his face.

" So I did ! It's all beginning to come back to me. Oh, heavens ! "

" *Can* you forgive me, George ? " cried Celia again.

He took her hand in his.

" As she spoke, George Mackintosh gave a kind of snorting groan and sat up. Celia

" Me ! On the links ! It isn't possible."

" It is only too true, I fear. And that is why this brave girl hit you with her niblick. You started to tell her a funny story just as she was making her eleventh shot to get her ball out of this ravine, and she took what she considered the necessary steps."

" Can you ever forgive me, George ? " cried Celia.

" Forgive you ? " he muttered. " Can *you* forgive *me ?* Me—a tee-talker, a green-gabbler, a prattler on the links, the lowest form of life known to science ! I am unclean, unclean ! "

" It's only a little mud, dearest," said Celia, looking at the sleeve of his coat. " It will brush off when it's dry."

" How can you link your lot with a man

who talks when people are making their shots ? "

" You will never do it again."

" But I have done it. And you stuck to me all through ! Oh, Celia ! "

" I loved you, George."

The man seemed to swell with a sudden emotion. His eyes lit up, and he thrust one hand into the breast of his coat while he raised the other in a sweeping gesture. For an instant he appeared on the verge of a flood of eloquence. And then, as if he had been made sharply aware of what it was that he intended to do, he suddenly sagged. The gleam died out of his eyes. He lowered his hand.

" Well, I must say that was rather decent of you," he said.

A lame speech, but one that brought an infinite joy to both his hearers. For it showed that George Mackintosh was cured beyond possibility of relapse.

" Yes, I must say you are rather a corker," he added.

" George ! " cried Celia.

I said nothing, but I clasped his hand ; and then, taking my clubs, I retired. When I looked round she was still in his arms. I left them there, alone together in the great silence.

uttered a sharp shriek and sank on her knees before him."

And so (concluded the Oldest Member) you see that a cure is possible, though it needs a woman's gentle hand to bring it about. And how few women are capable of doing what Celia Tennant did. Apart from the difficulty of summoning up the necessary resolution, an act like hers requires a straight eye and a pair of strong and supple wrists. It seems to me that for the ordinary talking golfer there is no hope. And the race seems to be getting more numerous every day. Yet the finest golfers are always the least loquacious. It is related of the illustrious Sandy McHoots that when, on the occasion of his winning the British Open Championship, he was interviewed by reporters from the leading daily papers as to his views on Tariff Reform, Bimetallism, the Trial by Jury System, and the Modern Craze for Dancing, all they could extract from him was the single word " Mphm ! " Having uttered which, he shouldered his bag and went home to tea. A great man. I wish there were more like him.

Money's Worth

by

PERCEVAL GIBBON

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

IT was at that point upon the way to Thun where the white dust-carpeted road is squeezed between the tree-clad hillside and the flower-gemmed gardens of the villas bordering the lake that the third tyre exploded like a bomb. Upon the noise of it, the pale girl in the back of the car carried a quick, involuntary hand to her heart, and the big grey man beside her exclaimed in rasping French. The rabbit-faced chauffeur humped a shoulder defensively and drew the car up at the side of the road.

"It is the heat," he said, plaintively, turning deprecating, uneasy eyes on his employer as he prepared to descend from his seat. "And now I must mend it; I have no more spares."

The big man made a small, impatient grimace. "How long will it take?" he demanded.

The chauffeur shrugged with outspread palms. "Half an hour—forty minutes," he suggested, hopefully. "If M'sieur and Mademoiselle would care to walk a little—there are seats in the shade of the trees farther on."

"What d'you think about it, Cecil?" The big man bent to the girl at his side. "Would you like to get out for a little while; or is it too hot for you?"

The very dust of the road was aglow with the sun-blaze, and the still surface of the lake beyond the gardens shimmered with the heat-haze. It was the afternoon of such a day as visits Switzerland once or twice in a summer, when the sunshine stands between the hills like deep water and the air is quelled and stagnant with heat. The girl raised her head slowly, as if with an effort, and seemed to sigh faintly. She was perhaps twenty-two years of age, little and slight; her attitude as she leaned back in the wide seat, beside the robust bulk of the man who leaned over her, enhanced her effect of a delicate fragility. The face she lifted to the glare of the sun was wan with an invalid pallor; she might have been ghostly but for a touch of auburn lustre in her fair hair and the quiet life in her dark eyes.

"Yes," she answered. "I'd like to get out for a little."

"Right!" said the big man, cheerily, and flung open the door of the tonneau. "Get on with it," he bade the chauffeur in French. "Come after us when you're through, and don't smother us with dust when you come."

With strong and gentle hands he helped the girl down, handling her with careful tenderness. He was a large man, thick-bodied, great in the shoulders, heavy-browed, with lips wide and firm under his close-clipped grey moustache. What was salient in him, as he stood and moved, was a quality as of assurance and security in every posture and motion, a manner as though power—the habit and knowledge of it—had penetrated every function of his being till it flavoured even the least of his actions. The rabbit-faced chauffeur, flimsy-bodied and uncomely, watched him with furtive, slavish eyes as he lifted the girl bodily from the step and set her beside him in the road.

"Now," he said, "we'll go slowly till we get to the shade and then we'll sit down. Take hold of my arm, honey."

His strong good-nature was like a benign tyranny. "Yes, father," said the girl, in

her faded, sick-room voice that yet had musical modulations in it, and passed her thin arm through the crook of his big elbow. Together they crossed to the side-walk and moved slowly along it towards where, beyond a bend in the road, a cluster of tree-tops held promise of shade. The chauffeur, standing limp by the machine, watched them depart ere he fell to work; he needed to be free of that dominance before he could develop any initiative of his own.

The pair of them, the large forceful man and the small frail girl, moved slowly through the sunlight. Warren Hall, who owed obedience to no man or men, had come hither upon the word of a Paris doctor, leaving to partners and assistants the great complexity of affairs that was his life. Here, where the dawn and evening breezes came freighted with the healing virtues of the great mountains, where yet the levels lay low enough to put no strain upon an impaired heart, he looked to find health for the daughter who drooped beside him while he walked. Together they had sought it for her in many places where luxury and hope are for sale to those who can pay lavishly; they had gathered in weariness and disappointment a strange lore of those caravanserais where the wealthy infirm of Europe congregate and languish; and now at last they had found themselves a refuge in the little antique town of Thun, through which the volume of the lake pours itself in swift glassy torrents.

"It's hot, isn't it?" said Warren Hall. He looked down at her, his big face, that could harden to granite, soft and solicitous. "You feeling any better to-day, Cecil?"

She raised her eyes to his and gave him a brief smile. It was as though a light had flashed upon her face, and for an instant the languor and wanness of her countenance were warmed to vividness and life. It was a gift she made him, and she knew his instant response to it in the sudden pressure of his big arm upon hers.

"I think so," she answered. "I—I like this place, father. I couldn't bear those big hotels and all those sick people any longer."

"That's fine," he said; and possibly among the many who hated and feared him, some would have pitied him at that moment for the sudden happiness that showed in him. "That's fine, Cecil! Oh, we'll get you well yet, all right—well enough to look after your poor old father in his old age. You're looking better, too. I can see the difference in you since we came here."

It was at that moment in their carefully slow progress that the girl stopped and stood. He came to a halt instantly upon the gentle drag of her arm, and his cheeriness dissolved to an instant anxiety.

"Why, Cecil!" he began.

She tried to smile at him again, but there was no mirth upon her lips.

"It's—nothing," she said, breathlessly. "Only—perhaps the heat. If—if I could sit down! Hold me, father!"

SHE was leaning against him and he passed a deft arm under hers and around her. Over her head, where it bowed against his burly shoulder, his big face was grim and dark. It was moments such as these that were to be feared—death-traps hidden along the way by which they groped for life—when the halting heart in the girl's bosom flogged itself to an insane gallop towards destruction and death. He could feel it now as he held her to him, the wild irregular beating of it perceptible through her clothes and his. He cast desperate eyes back along the road to where the chauffeur knelt beside the car and pried at the burst tyre.

The man's back was to him; he would have shouted to him to drive the car hither as it was, but he feared to startle her. The road was empty in both directions. He backed against the white fence of the garden behind him, shifted his hold upon the girl to give her an easier posture, and set his iron jaw to wait till the spasm should have passed.

It was a couple of minutes before at last she lifted her head and moved to slacken his arm. He let her go at once, but kept a hand lightly upon her. They looked at each other.

"Well," he said, in matter-of-fact tones; "that was sudden!"

"Yes," she answered. There was a touch of colour in her cheeks for the moment as though she were flushed with effort.

"Easier now?" he asked.

"Yes; it's gone now," she said.

It was thus they spoke together always when the lurking menace had shown itself. So much at least they had in common—they could not tell one another of the cold fear that was theirs in those moments, she with death imminent before her, he with loss and grief reaching over her bent head at him.

They stood looking at one another; they seemed to be alone together upon the white road in a complete solitude; so that the voice that suddenly spoke to them across the fence from the garden startled them both.

"Is anything wrong?" it said.

They turned, the girl with that involuntary movement of her hand towards her heart. Beyond the fence a tall, slender woman, clad from neck to skirt-hem in an earth-soiled blue overall, stood regarding them. Upon her head she wore a broad-brimmed hat of rough straw such as labourers wear in the fields around Thun; she had gauntlets of undressed leather on her hands, and in one of

them she carried a gardening-trowel. In the shadow of her hat she showed a face composed, enterprising, and adequate.

Warren Hall took in the ensemble of her with a single shrewd glance ; men and women are the chief materials in most trades, and he was an expert in his. He raised his hat.

" Why, ma'am," he replied, " my daughter here—I fancy the heat's been a little too much for her. Our car burst a tyre back there, and we got out to stroll along a little way an' she found she couldn't manage it."

The tall woman needed longer to estimate their quality than Warren Hall had required for hers. She bent on them a gaze that was frankly an inspection, and even walked nearer to the fence to look along the road and verify the existence of the car. It was done so calmly and openly, so much in the manner of a decent formality, that Warren Hall failed to feel indignation at it all.

" Your man will probably be some time," said the tall woman then. " Would you care to come in and sit down where it's cooler ? "

" Why, thank you," said Hall, awkwardly. For himself he would have refused, but his daughter was another matter. " You're very kind."

He took the girl's arm in his. A gate let them through to the garden with its blaze of geraniums, and they followed their hostess up the steps and in at the door of the villa. " We'll go right through," she dropped over her shoulder to them as they entered, and led the way along a brief corridor to the room at its farther end. As she thrust open the door of it to enter, it was as though light and colour, blended like tones in a chord, leaped out upon them. There were the wide blue water-floor of the lake, the green and black and snow of the opposite mountains, and sunlight tempered and purged of its heat through a filter of shadow.

" Now," said their hostess, standing with hand on the door, " if you'll make yourselves comfortable here "—she motioned with the gardening-trowel towards the deep chairs that stood about the place—" I'll see what I can do about tea."

Warren Hall began a phrase of deprecatory thanks, but she nodded curtly and departed in the middle of it, letting the door swing to behind her.

" WELL, what do you think of that ? " he said, amusedly. He turned to his daughter. She had already seated herself in one of the low chairs, and now lay back in it facing the great calm glory of the lake. Before her, the wide French windows were open to the broad veranda ; shadow, grateful as water to a thirsty man, flooded the place. She looked up at him as he turned, and he saw upon her face a repose as of utter content.

" Comfortable, honey ? " he asked.

" Father ! " she said. " Father—*look* at this room ! "

" Why ? " he said, not understanding. " What's the matter with it ? "

" Isn't it—isn't it perfect ! " He stared at her ; it was a long and sad time since he had seen so much of interest and gladness in her. " Oh ! It's lovely ! I could get well here ! "

" You could, eh ? "

He stared about him. He was not readily sensitive to the impressions that moved her so easily, and it was only gradually that he saw what had stirred her. The room was square and low-ceilinged for its size ; besides the view over the lake, a wide latticed window in its western wall looked away to the hill-throned castle and the steep red roofs of Thun. A wide hearth lined with glazed tiles was opposite the French windows ; and the floor was bare, with bright rugs here and there. It contained nothing that was obviously costly or rare ; and yet he perceived, as he gazed about him, while the girl watched him smiling, that somehow beauty, the grace of sheer rightness of proportion and equipment, was instinct in the place.

" Yes," he admitted, cautiously. " There's something about it ; I don't just know what it is. And you think you could get well here, do you ? "

" I'm getting better already," she smiled. " I never want to move from this chair. I can feel this room holding me in its arms and keeping me safe. After all those hotels and sanatorium places—it's heaven."

He was still standing, watching her under lowered brows. She was scarcely recognizable as the limp and feeble creature he had lifted from the car so short a while before, nor as the girl who had all but died in his arms upon the road. There was a glow in her, awakened life in her face, and her eyes were soft and bright.

" Well," he began, " if that's how you feel about it, Cecil, I guess——"

He had to break off there, for the door behind him opened and their tall hostess reappeared. She had slipped off the soiled blue overall and laid aside the straw hat, the gauntlets, and the trowel, and revealed herself now in a workmanlike skirt of worn tweed and white blouse.

" Making yourselves at home ? That's right," she said, in her clear, assured voice. " There'll be tea in a minute. You'd like some tea, wouldn't you ? "

The tea arrived, on her heels, as it were ; and it was while they sat, balancing their cups, that Warren Hall began to move towards his purpose.

"'I'm getting better already,' she smiled. 'I never want to move from this chair. I can feel this room holding me in its arms and keeping me safe.'"

"This is a nice home you've got here, ma'am," he said. "You live here the year round, I suppose?"

The tall woman shook her head. "It isn't mine," she replied. "It's my brother's. He just lends it to me sometimes when he's away. To-morrow he comes back, and then I'm off to England again."

"To-morrow, eh?" Hall considered. "We're staying in Thun—at the Keller Hotel. I hope I'll have a chance to meet your brother some time. My name's Hall—Warren Hall."

It was proper that to that she should reply: "Not *the* Warren Hall?" For if he was not Pierpont Morgan, he was—well!—Warren Hall, and the difference was not vast. But she only nodded.

"You're American, aren't you?" she inquired.

"Yes," said Hall.

"I dare say you'll meet my brother in Thun," she went on. "He walks in nearly every day. Carr's his name—Seymour Carr. He's a painter."

"A painter, eh?"

"That's what he calls himself," she smiled. "Really, I think it's just an excuse for doing nothing. But since he managed to get a picture into the Salon there's no arguing with him."

She continued to prattle and Hall to interpose appropriate replies. He managed, however, to elicit that the painter had built the house himself and owned the land on which it stood. Cecil, lying back in her chair, said nothing; Hall, glancing at her from time to time, saw that her face still preserved its tranquil gladness.

IT had it yet when, the tyre at last repaired, the big car bore them back to Thun.

"Well," said Hall, glancing down at her at his side, "feeling rested, honey?"

She smiled and nodded. "It *was* the heat, I think," she said. "All I needed was just to sit in that wonderful room and—and soak in it. I'm all right now."

"I see you are," said Hall. Then, after a pause: "Cecil, it was a pleasant room all right; I noticed that, but just what *was* it in the place that put you right like that? I haven't seen you so well and bright for years; and if we can find out what did it, I've got to get it for you. Was it anything that's got a name in any language I know?"

She smiled again; never before had she been so prodigal of smiles.

"I don't know it if it has," she said. "But—didn't you feel it at all, father? Just that quietness and coolness, and everything around so—so right."

"H'm!" he said. "But quietness and coolness we can get any time, Cecil. The other thing, too, I guess! And if it comes to that, I can get you that very room. I can get you anything that'll put that rested and contented look in your face, dear."

She glanced up at him quickly. "Not *that* room, father," she said. "Places like that—no, one can't get *them!*"

"Can't one, though?" He sat up and squared his massive shoulders, looking down on her. He had never turned to Cecil the face with which he had fought his way to wealth and power; for her it had never failed to soften; but now, for an instant, the granite of it showed through his smile. "Can't one, hey? Well, now, just you watch *me!*"

But she did not smile again; instead she shook her head soberly, and into her bright face there crept once more the forlornness and the languor. Warren Hall watched her with eyes that narrowed and hardened.

It was two days later that he stood again in the room of healing and saw across the veranda the mighty calm presences of the lake and the mountains. He would have waited longer, made inquiries, reconnoitred his ground, and prepared his attack to its last detail; but the day before Cecil had suffered another heart-fit, and after it, limp and exhausted upon her bed, with the fat little Swiss doctor watching her with eyes full of foreboding, she had spoken weakly.

"I wish I were there now," she had murmured, and Hall had understood. From that moment he had delayed only to assure himself that the owner of the house had returned to it.

The young man who presently appeared carried in his hand the visiting card which Hall had handed to the maid who admitted him. Like his sister, he was tall and spare, and there was the same genial assurance and directness of address. With it went a touch of whimsicality; he smiled from the card to his visitor as though something in Hall's identity amused him.

"Mr. Warren Hall?" he inquired. "But you aren't the Paris man, are you—the millionaire, I mean?"

Hall nodded. "I'm the man you mean," he answered. "Mr. Seymour Carr, isn't it?"

"That's me," said Carr, and laughed. "I say, did my sister let you in the other day? What a lark! Fancy entertaining Warren Hall unawares! You haven't come to buy pictures, I suppose?"

'I don't mind doing that, too," answered Hall. "I'll buy pretty well anything you like as long as you'll sell me what I want as well."

As he spoke, he was taking the measure of his man. Upon the face of it, it should be easy enough for him, who had bought and

sold so many and such diverse things in his day, to have his way with a trifler of this type; but he was not yet assured. Strong wills he had bent to his uses; subtle brains he had out-manœuvred; but the man of whims, the man of light and odd preferences—him he approached with caution.

Seymour Carr laughed again. "Have a chair," he suggested, and took one himself. Warren Hall seated himself facing him. "I haven't any pictures here, you know. They're in my studio in Chelsea. I only got back from there yesterday. Did you see that thing of mine in the Salon?"

Hall shook his big head. "I didn't, but I will," he said. "But it wasn't pictures that I came about to-day, Mr. Carr. That'll be for another time."

"Not pictures?" Carr was lighting a cigarette. He glanced across, still smiling. "And me fancying I was going to skin a millionaire at last!"

"I shouldn't wonder if you did, after all," said Hall. "One thing I didn't come for: I didn't come to bargain. I came to pay your price."

"Sounds good enough," said the other, lightly. "What is it you want to buy, by the way?"

"I want to buy this house," answered Hall.

THE other stared at him through his drift of cigarette smoke. There were some seconds of silence.

"Sorry," said Carr at length. "But the house isn't for sale."

He flicked the ash from the tip of his cigarette, replaced it in his mouth, and sat gazing tranquilly at the other. Warren Hall frowned, as in thought.

"I know it isn't on offer, Mr. Carr," he said, "and I want you to understand that I must have some pretty good reason for walking into a stranger's house and asking him to let me have it. Now, whether you sell or don't sell——"

Carr, still smoking calmly, interrupted. "I don't sell," he replied. "I said so."

"A moment, Mr. Carr," urged Hall. "I want you to know how I come to do a thing like this. Your sister probably told you it was on account of a young lady that she invited me in here?"

Carr nodded. "Your daughter, wasn't it?"

"My daughter," confirmed Hall. He gathered himself together for what he had to say. He was noted among his associates for his gift of effective statement. The other, watching him half-amusedly, saw the large, strong face take on a new seriousness; it was suddenly simple and reverend. Carefully, then, in plainest words he told his hearer of Cecil, his only living relative. He told of the search through inland spas and Riviera pleasure-cities for the means of life and health, of the dreariness of the great specialized hotels and nursing homes, of the dwindling and re-kindling of hope. It was a good story; he felt his way with it to his hearer's interest; and so came at last to the events of the day before last.

"I don't quite understand it myself," he said. "But if you'd seen her like I did—first half-dying outside your fence and then sitting here with all the weariness gone from her face—well, you'd understand that I wouldn't stop at much to get her what she needs."

Carr had not moved. As Warren Hall finished, he tossed the butt of his cigarette to the veranda.

"It's a wonderful compliment to my room," he said, "and I appreciate it very highly. Just a fancy of hers, though, of course; invalids have these fancies, don't they?"

"They do," answered Warren Hall. "And they die of 'em."

"Oh, well, I'm sure your daughter won't," parried Carr. "You can afford to give her something much more splendid than this."

He rose as he spoke and the elder man rose likewise.

"You're fond of the place?" asked the latter. "Built it yourself, didn't you?"

Carr nodded. "Oh, yes; I suppose I *am* rather fond of it," he answered. "I practically designed it, you see—had an idea I'd have a house to fit me instead of a hand-me-down one. And I think I've got it. It *is* rather a good room, isn't it?"

"I'm wondering what it cost you," said Hall.

The other turned a wary eye on him. "Oh, about forty thousand francs," he said. "And that includes the site. Not what you'd call expensive, Mr. Hall, is it?"

"No," said Hall. "It isn't." And if you wanted to sell it—which you don't!—I shouldn't call ten times that too much for my purpose."

The young man met his gaze coolly. "Four hundred thousand, eh? By Jove! What a chance I'm losing!"

"About that," said Hall. "Call it a level half-million to save arithmetic."

"The bidding is lively," remarked Carr. "Are you sure you wouldn't go to a million?"

"No," said Warren Hall, gravely. "I'm not sure of anything of the kind."

The other whistled. "Camels will soon be going through needles' eyes at this rate," he said. Then, with a touch of irritation: "But it's no use, Mr. Hall. I don't want your million and I do want my house. I'm sorry about your daughter—very sorry;

but you yourself wouldn't admit a chance stranger's claim to buy your roof over your head because his daughter wanted it, would you ? So, I'm afraid——"

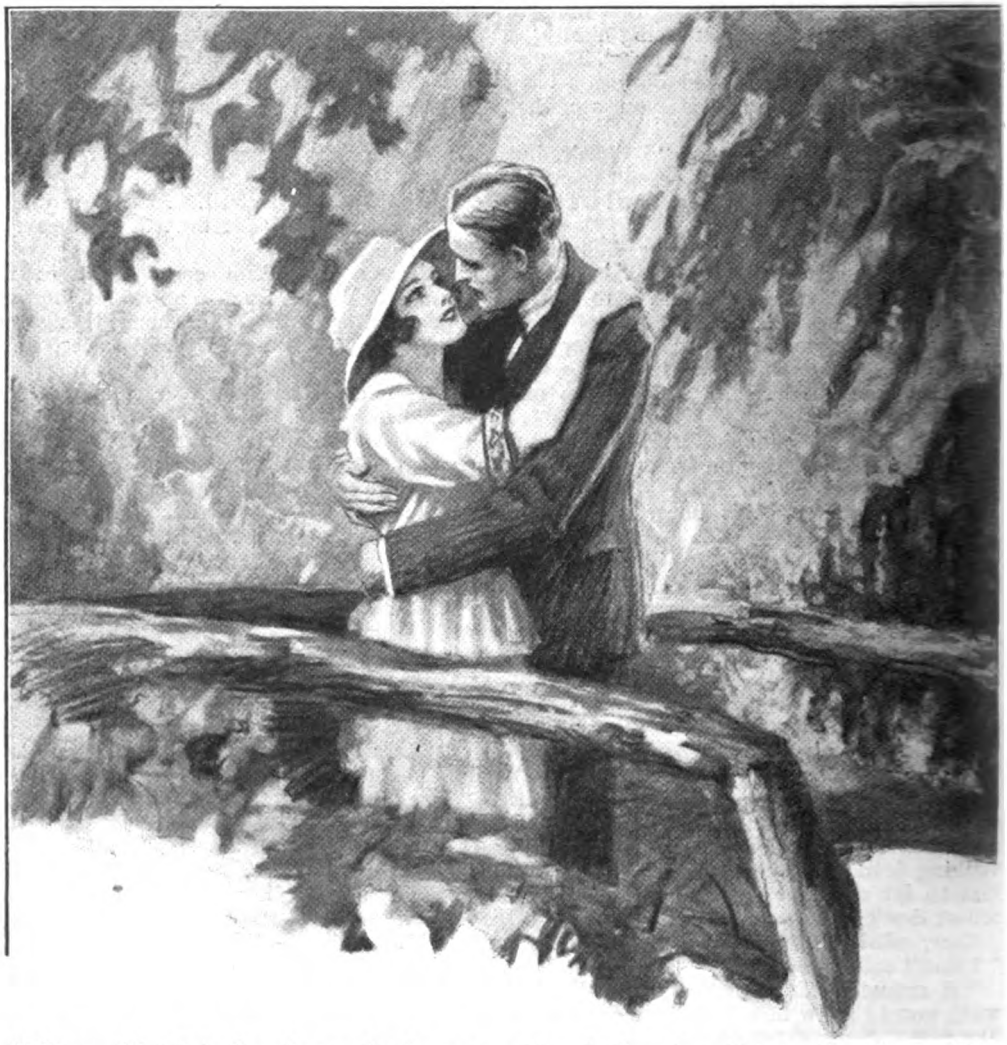
Warren Hall held up his large white hand to still him.

" Listen ! " he said. " We've not understood each other. I *want* this house—d'you get that ? I *want* it ! You've refused a million francs and I'm not blaming you, because you can get more. You know who I am and you've an idea that I can pay. You're right—I can ! Well, I said I didn't come here to bargain. I agree to your price ! I don't know what it is, but I agree to it ! You can have the money in Paris on demand or here within twenty-four hours. *Now* will you talk business ? "

The young man had flushed slightly under the other's insistence.

" Yes," he answered, crisply, " I will ; and I'll try to make you understand at last. I have all the money I want and the house is not for sale. And that's all I have to say."

For full half a minute they faced each other in silence. It was not Warren Hall's first experience of a situation in which money was valueless ; things that are unbuyable at any price are common enough. But here was a thing withheld, as it seemed to him, in reasonless folly.



" Warren Hall halted at the turn by the trees. They had not heard his tread. Young Carr

"Then——" he began, at last, but checked himself. "Well, I needn't bother you any more, Mr. Carr," he said, in ordinary tones. "I'll just say 'good morning' and be getting back to Thun."

If he was suffering under a sense of defeat, it did not appear on him as he showed himself in Thun. At lunch he was cheery, with intervals of thought, and in the afternoon, after a couple of meditative cigars, he sent off a number of telegrams to his Paris offices. Later, as the fruit of further meditation, he announced to his daughter that law business would require him in Berne for some days and that he would leave next morning. And the following day, cheery yet, with that subdued but tenacious good-humour which men knew for his fighting manner, he departed by motor for the capital.

Of his activities in Berne, of the secretaries who came from Paris to meet him, of the lawyers and conveyancers whom he bought to his discreet service, little was said at the time and less is now remembered, for Warren Hall was always a master of the art of the attack from cover. The "some days" for which he was to have been absent, however, prolonged itself to close upon three weeks. It was a Sunday afternoon when the big car, pitching like a ship in a sea-way over the cobblestones of Thun, brought him back to the Hotel Keller.

put out an arm; she swayed to it like a wind-blown stalk and he bent his lips to hers."

The young lady—Mademoiselle—Fräulein (according, respectively, to her maid, to the highly expert nurse, and the hotel manager) was well, was better than she had ever been. She was at the moment walking with a friend in the little woods at the back of the hotel garden; she had said she would be in to tea.

"Right!" said Warren Hall. "I'll just stroll along an' meet her!"

He passed sedately enough across the parched lawns to where the little forest of saplings bounded the garden. But once within their shelter, he cast off his leisurely dignity and hastened with long strides along the little tortuous path. It was not only that he longed with all his being for his daughter; he came to her in triumph. The mole-work in Berne had unearthed the hoped-for treasure. His cohort of searchers and experts had nosed out through records of past transfers and conveyances that flaw in the title to young Carr's land which may occur so easily in a kindly and trustful community, and he had bought up the rights of everyone who might conceivably enforce a claim to the place. The house was his for the snatching and his hands were avid for the clutch. He was bringing it to Cecil for a gift.

He peered to either side of him through the slender trunks as he went, eager to discover her. And suddenly he came upon her.

There was a stream, an irrigation ditch by trade, but in effect a swift brook of deep clear water, that traversed the wood; the path, rounding a clump of larger trees, joined it at a sharp angle and crossed it by a little bridge. Upon the hand-rail of this leaned the girl, and beside her—yes, it was young Carr.

Warren Hall halted at the turn by the trees. They had not heard his tread upon the soft black earth of the path. They were speaking together—and the rush and tinkle of the swift waters covered their words from him. He stood staring; even yet he had not understood. But presently they stood up from the rail; young Carr's back was to him, but Cecil's face was in full view. At sight of it he caught his breath. No languors now; no deadness of weary pallor; no blank flag of life's tired surrender. The face she raised to the other was alight with soft fires, vivid, tender, and glorious. Young Carr put out an arm; she swayed to it like a wind-blown stalk and he bent his lips to hers.

Warren Hall turned and, moving on tiptoe, hastened back along the path. His fighter's face was set in a sheer amaze; he hurried like one that fears to be followed. It was not till he reached the sun-burnt lawns that he slackened speed and composed himself to outward calm.

"Gosh!" The words of his youth returned to him. "Cecil—and him! That darned house is going to cost me more than I reckoned!"

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 95.

(The Third of the Series.)

THE men who fought to save it should not lack
A home like this at least when they come back.

1. This is truly laughable.
2. Beef dissolved and quaffable.
3. One and individual.
4. One from one—residual?
5. Head-tire of nobility.
6. Floor-mat of utility.
7. This, for days long past, I call
Just a shade bombastical.

EDI.

Answers to Acrostic No. 95 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on June 9th.*

Solutions should be signed at the foot with the sender's pseudonym.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

ANSWER TO No. 94.

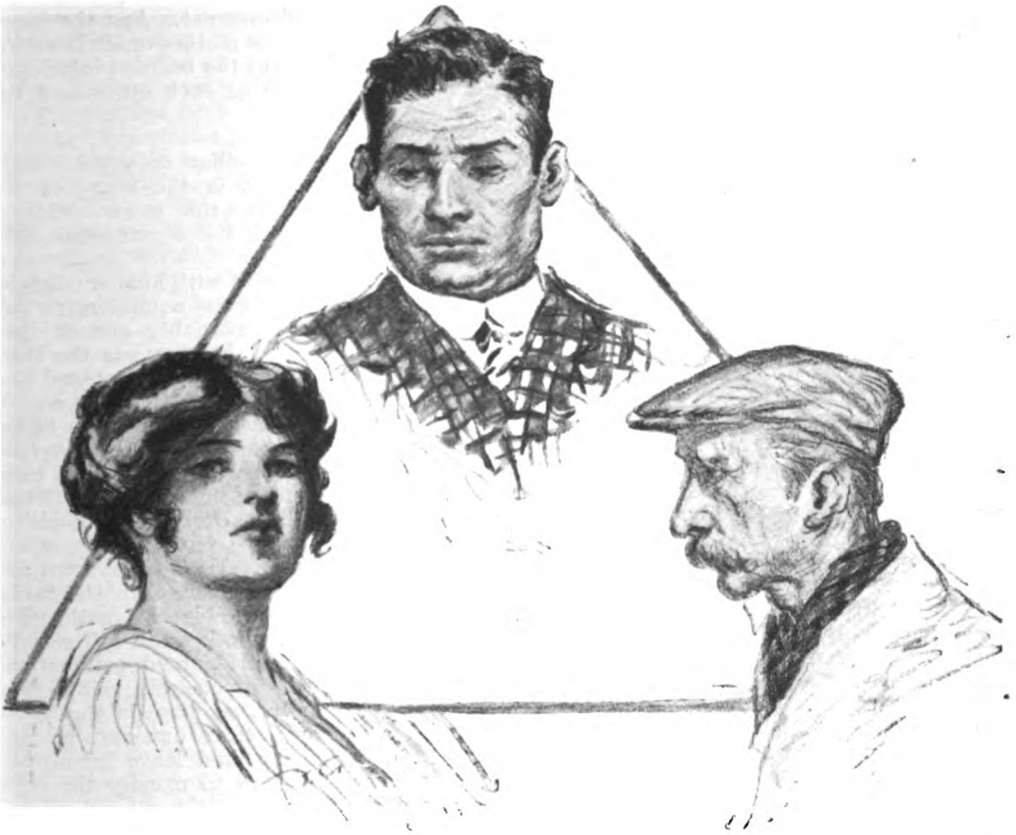
1.	G	ri	N
2.	U	nic	O
3.	E	ve	R
4.	R	cal	M
5.	N	europter	A
6.	S	ermo	N
7.	E	meral	D
8.	Y	esterda	Y

NOTE.—Light 2. Unicorn; R.N.

SIXTEENTH SERIES: RESULT.

Eight solvers answered the entire series with complete correctness. Six of them win prizes of two guineas each, and will be ineligible for further success during the seventeenth series, now running; one solver sent no name and address; and one, Wynell, was a prize-winner last time.

The successful solvers are: Arden, Mr. R. W. Bates, R.N. College, Dartmouth; Beggar, Mr. B. G. Pearce, 5, Ethelbert Road, Bromley, Kent; Darnlinvarach, Major Drummond, Falcon Lodge, Putney; Dun, Mr. D. G. Robertson, Torrie, Enborne Road, Newbury, Berks; Noluc, Mrs. R. M. Milne, Eggardun, Dartmouth; Reg, Mr. H. Lees, 3, Campden House Chambers, London, W.8.



"Old Iron"

by STACY AUMONIER

Illustrated by FRANK GILLETT.

YOU know how the story goes, of course. Husband and wife just about to retire to bed. Wife yawns, husband knocks out his pipe on the grate, and remarks :—

"Well, better turn in, I suppose."

Wife replies, "Yes"; then adds, languidly: "I meant to call round and ask the Cartwrights to dinner on Thursday."

Husband, after prolonged pause :—

"I'll pop round and ask them now, if you like. They never go to bed till very late."

"I wish you would, dear."

Husband pulls on a cloth cap and goes out. Wife yawns again, and picks up the *Ladies' Boudoir* and idly examines charmeuse gown and notes the prices of gloves at Foxtrot and Fieldfern's. Yawns again more audibly. Collects sewing and places in work-basket. Takes the kitten out and locks it up in the scullery. Yawns and walks languidly upstairs. Turns on the light and spends fifteen minutes examining face at various angles in the glass. Begins to disrobe. Thinks, sleepily: "Tom's a long time."

Brushes out her hair and admires it considerably. Conceives a new way of dressing it for future festivities. Disrobes further. Yawns. Disrobes completely and re-robes—dressing-gown.

" It's too bad being all this time ! "

Vitality slightly stirred in the direction of resentment and a kind of mild apprehension. Lies on the bed and drowsily reviews the experiences of the day. Dreams. Suddenly starts with a consciousness of cold. Gropes for her wrist-watch. *A quarter past one !* Jumps from the bed, feeling the cold hand of fear on her heart. Runs downstairs and stares helplessly out of the front door. Pauses to consider a thousand possible eventualities. Returns to bedroom and completely re-robes, not forgetting to do her hair neatly and powder her nose. Puts on cloak and goes out. Cartwright's house all in darkness. Bangs on the front door and rings bell. Head of old Mr. Cartwright at first-floor window.

" Who the devil's that ? "

" It's me. Where's Tom ? "

" Tom ! Haven't seen him for weeks ! "

" Good God ! Let me in."

Cartwright family aroused. Panic. Fainting-scene in drawing-room. Brandy, smelling salts, and eau-de-Cologne. Young George Cartwright mounts his bicycle—rides to the police-station ; on the way talks to policeman on point duty. No, no one heard anything of a thin man with a snuff-coloured moustache. At police-station no accidents so far reported. Chief inspector will make a note and await developments. Night passes, and the following day. No news.

Weeks, months, years elapse. Eight years slide easily by. The wife survives her grief. She marries the local organist, a blond and commendable young man. They continue to live in the same road. Children gather round her knee. One, two, three, twins ; an interval, six, seven, handsome blond children. They grow up.

Twenty-two years elapse. They are sitting at tea. The father, the mother, and the eldest son, a handsome young man in a grey flannel suit. He kisses his mother, and says :—

" I must go now, mother dear. I have to take a Bible-class."

He goes out (presumably to the Bible-class). The mother smiles with pride, the father glows with benignity, and helps himself to another buttered muffin. Everything perfect. Suddenly the door opens, and an old man with a long grey beard and a perambulating manner wanders into the room. He stares at the wife and mumbles :—

" Did you say Thursday or Friday ? My memory is not what it was."

And the wife stares at the old man, and then at the blond organist. And the blond organist stares at the mother of his beautiful children, and then at the bearded interloper. And they all stare at each other and feel very embarrassed.

THE story is familiar to you ? Well, perhaps so. It is the story of the eternal triangle, the most useful of geometrical forms in the construction of a Romantic pattern.

Heigho ! the trouble with human triangles is that they are never equilateral. Two sides together are invariably greater than the third side. Jim Canning was the third side of a triangle, and he got flattened out. In fact, his wife used to flatten him out on every possible occasion. She was bigger than he, and she was aided by the *tertium quid*, Ted Woollams, who was nothing more or less than a professional pugilist. What was Jim to do ? In every well-conducted epic the hero performs physical feats which leave you breathless. He is always tall and strong and a bit too quick with the rapier for any villain who crosses his path. But what about a hero who is small and elderly, of poor physique, short-sighted, asthmatical, with corns which impede his gait ? You may say that he has no place in the heroic arena. He should clear out and go and get on with his job, and leave heroism to people who know how to manage the stuff. And yet there was something heroic in the heart of Jim Canning ; a quick sympathy, and an instinct for self-sacrifice.

He used to keep a second-hand furniture shop, which, you must understand, is a very different thing from an antique shop. Jim's furniture had no determinate character such as that which goes by the name of Chippendale, Sheraton, or Heppelwhite. It was just " furniture." Well-worn sofas, broken chairs and tables, mattresses with the stuffing exuding from holes, rusty brass beds with the knobs missing, broken pots and mirrors and dumb-bells, even clothes and screws, false teeth and birdcages, and ancient umbrellas. But his speciality was old iron. Trays and trays and baskets filled with scraps of old iron.

His establishment used to be known in Camden Town as " The Muck-Shop." At odd times of the day you might observe his small, pathetic figure trundling a barrow laden with the spoils of some hard-pressed inhabitant. He was always known as a fair dealer. He paid a fair price and never took advantage of ignorance.

His marriage was a failure from the very first. She was a big, strapping woman, the daughter of a local greengrocer. Twelve years younger than Jim, vain, frivolous, empty-headed, and quarrelsome. Her reasons

for marrying him were obscure. Probably she had arrived at the time when she wanted to marry, and Jim was regarded as a successful shopkeeper, who could keep her in luxury. He was blinded by her physical attractions, and tried his utmost to believe that his wife was everything to be desired. Disillusionment came within the first month of their married life, at the moment, indeed, when Clara realized that her husband's business was not so thriving as she had been led to believe. She immediately accused him of deceiving her. Then she began to sulk and neglect him. She despised his manner of conducting business—his conscientiousness and sense of fair-dealing.

"If you'd put some ginger into it," she once remarked, "and not always be thinking about the feelings of the tripe you buy from, we might have a house in the Camden Road and a couple of servants."

This had never been Jim's ambition. Many years ago he had attended a sale at Shorwell Green, on the borders of Sussex, a glorious spot near the Downs, amidst lime trees and little running streams. It had been the dream of his life that one day he would retire there with the woman he loved—and her children. When he put the matter to Clara, she laughed him to scorn.

"Not half!" she said. "Catch me living among butterflies and blinking cows! The Camden Road is my game."

Jim sighed, and went on trundling his barrow. Well, there it was! If the woman he had married desired it, he must do what she wanted. In any case it was necessary to begin to save. But with Clara he found it exceedingly difficult to begin to save. She idled her day away, bought trinkets, neglected her domestic offices, went to the pictures, and sucked sweets. Any attempt to point out to her the folly of her ways only led to bitter recriminations, tears, and savage displays of temper, even physical violence to her husband.

Then there came a day when Jim fondly believed that the conditions of their married life would be ameliorated. A child was born, a girl, and they called her Annie. Annie became the apple of his eye. He would hurry back from the shop to attend at Annie's bath. He would creep in at night and kiss the warm skin of her little skull. He would think of her as he pottered around amidst his broken chairs and tables, and utter little croons of anticipatory pleasure. Annie! She would grow up and be the mainstay of his life. He would work and struggle for her. Her life should be a path of roses and happiness. His wife, too, appeared to improve upon the advent of Annie. The baby absorbed her.

Two years of comparative happiness followed. Jim began to save. Oh, very slowly, very, very slowly! He still had less than three hundred pounds put on one side for—that vague future of settled security. But still, it was a solid beginning. In another ten or fifteen years he would still be—well, not quite an old man. An active man, he hoped. If he could save only one hundred pounds a year!

IT was at this period that Ted Woollams appeared on the scene. He was the son of a manager of a swimming bath. On Sundays he used to box in "Fairyland" for purses of various amounts—he was a redoubtable middle-weight. During the week he swaggered about Camden Town in new check suits, his fingers glittering with rings. He met Clara one evening at a public dance. The mutual attraction appears to have been instantaneous. They danced together the whole evening, and he saw her home.

And then began the squeezing out of the third side of the triangle. Jim was not strong enough for them. At first he professed to see nothing in the friendship. He described Ted as "a jolly young fellow, a great pal of my wife's." And Ted treated him with a certain amount of respect. He called in at odd times, stayed to meals, drank Jim's beer, and smoked Jim's tobacco. The triangle was quite intact. It was Annie who caused the first disruption. She disliked the prize-fighter, and screamed at the sight of him. This led to reprisals when he had gone, and Jim's championship of the child did not help to cement the always doubtful nature of the affection between husband and wife. There were cross words and tears, and once she pushed him over a chair, and in the fall he cut his temple.

A few days later Ted Woollams called in a great state of agitation. He wished to see Jim alone. It appeared that a wonderful opportunity had occurred to him. It was a complicated story about a quantity of bonded brandy which he had a chance of acquiring and selling at an enormous profit. He wanted to borrow fifty pounds till Saturday week, when he would pay Jim back sixty. Jim said he would lend him the fifty, but he didn't want any interest.

When Saturday week came Ted said the deal had fallen through, but he would let him have the money back the following Saturday. In the meantime he came to supper nearly every night. Sometimes he drank too much beer. Then Clara began to dress for the part. She bought expensive frocks and had the accounts sent in to Jim. She neglected the child.

The months drifted by, and Ted was always going to pay, but he became more and more part and parcel of the household.

" As the boxer advanced upon Jim, the latter thought: 'He's going

Jim's savings began to dwindle. He protested to both his wife and Ted, but they treated him with indifference. The boxer began to abuse his familiarity. He would frequently tell Jim that he was not wanted in the drawing-room after supper. When spoken to about the money he laughed, and said :—

" Oh, you've got plenty, old 'un. Lend us another fiver."

On one occasion Jim was foolish enough to lend him another ten pounds, under the spell of some heartrending story about a poor woman in the street where Woollams lived. This lopsided triangle held together for nearly four years. Jim was unhappy and distracted. He did not know how to act. He could not leave his wife, for the sake of the child. If he turned her out—and he had no legal power to do so—she would probably take Annie with her. And the child was devoted to him. They were great friends, and it was only this friendship which prevented him indulging in some mad act. Several times he ordered Woollams out of the house and forbade him to come again, but the boxer laughed at him and called him an old fool. He knew that his wife was practically keeping him. They went to cinemas together, and often disappeared for the whole day ; but she always returned at night. It was sometimes two or three in the morning when she returned. Jim had no proof of actual unfaithfulness. Neither could he afford to hire detectives, a course of action which, in any case, appeared to him distasteful. Far from saving a hundred pounds a year, he was spending more than his income. His savings had dwindled to barely forty pounds. His business was stagnant, but still he trundled his barrow hither and thither, calling out " Old iron ! Old iron ! " and he struggled to pay the fair price.

During a great period of his life Jim had enjoyed an unaccountable but stanch friendship with a gentleman named Isaac Rubens. Isaac Rubens was a Jew in a slightly similar way of business to himself, and he conducted a thriving business at the corner of the Holy Angel Road. Isaac was in many respects a very remarkable man. Large, florid and puffy, with keen eagle eyes and an enormous nose, he was a man of

to kill me.' He thrust out his arms in an ineffectual defence."

profound knowledge of the history and value of *objets d'art*. He was, moreover, a man of his word. He was never known to give or accept a written contract, and never known to break a verbal one. The friendship between these two was in many respects singular.

When this trouble came upon Jim he immediately repaired to his friend's house and told him the whole story.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! This is a bad business! A bad business!" exclaimed Isaac, when it was over. His moist eyes glowed amidst the general humidity of his face. "How can I advise you? An erring wife is the curse of God. You cannot turn her away without knowledge. Thank God! my Lena—but there, among my people such lapses are rare. You have no evidence of unfaithfulness?"

"No."

"You must be gentle with her, gentle but firm. Point out the error of her ways."

"I'm always doing that, Isaac."

"She may get over it—a passing infatuation. Such things happen."

"If it wasn't for the child!"

"Yes, yes, I understand. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Very distressing, my friend. If I can be of any assistance——".

He thrust out his large hands helplessly. It is the kind of trouble in which no man can help another, and each knew it. Jim hovered by the door.

"It's nice to have someone to—talk to, anyway," he muttered; then he picked up his cap and shuffled away.

ANNIE was nine when the climax came. An intelligent, pretty child, with dark hair and quick, impulsive manners. Her passionate preference for her father did not tend to smooth the troubles of the household. She attended the grammar-school and had many girl-friends. She saw very little of her mother.

One evening Jim returned home late. He had been on a visit to his friend Isaac. He found Annie seated on the bottom stair, in her nightdress. Her face was very pale and set, her eyes bright. She had been crying. When she saw her father, she gasped:—

"Daddy—— Oh, Daddy!"

He seized her in his arms and whispered:—

"What is it, my dear?"

Then she cried quietly while he held her. He did not attempt to hurry her. At last she got her voice under control, and gasped, quietly:—

"I had gone to bed. I don't know why it was. I got restless in bed. I came down again, softly. I peeped into the sitting-room—— Oh, Daddy!"

"What? What, my love?"

"That man—— That man and——"

"Your mother?"

"Yes."

"He was——"

"He was kissing her, and—— Oh!"

Jim clutched his child and pressed her head against his breast.

"I went in—— He *struck* me."

"What!"

"He struck me because I wouldn't promise not to tell."

"He struck you, eh? He struck you! That man struck you, eh?"

"Yes, Daddy."

"Where is he?"

"They're—up there now. I'm frightened."

"Go to bed, my love. Go to bed."

He carried her up the stairs and fondled her, and put her into bed.

"It's all right now, my love. Go to sleep. Pleasant dreams. It's all right. Daddy will look after you."

Then he went downstairs.

A SOUND of laughter greeted him through the door of the sitting-room. He gripped the handle and walked deliberately in. Ted Woollams was stretching himself luxuriously on the sofa. His heavy, sensual face appeared puffy and a little mussed. Clara was lying back in an easy chair, smoking a cigarette. Jim did not speak. He walked up to Ted and without any preliminary explanation struck him full on the nose with his clenched fist. For a moment the boxer appeared more surprised than anything. His eyes narrowed; then the pain of the blow appeared to sting him. He rose from the sofa with a growl. As he advanced upon Jim the latter thought:—

"He's going to kill me. What a fool I was not to strike him with a poker!"

He thrust out his arms in an ineffectual defence. There was something horribly ugly, ugly and revolting, in the animal-like lurch of the man bearing down on him—the demon of an inevitable doom. Jim struck wildly at the other's arms, at the same time thinking:—

"My little girl! I promised to look after her."

A jarring blow above the heart staggered him, and as he began to crumple forward he had a quick vision of the more destroying fate, the something which came crashing to his jaw. He heard his wife scream; then darkness enveloped him.

A long and very confused period followed. When he was once more a complete master of his brain he realized abruptly that he was in the ward of a hospital. His jaw was strapped up tight and was giving him great pain; a nurse was feeding him with milk through a silver tube. He wanted to talk to her, but found he could not speak. Then he recalled the incident of his calamity. Well, there it was. He had been brought up in a hard school. Old iron! The instinct of self-preservation prompted him to bide his time. Doubtless his jaw was broken: a long job, but he would get well again. At the end of the journey Annie awaited him. What was the child doing now? Who was looking after her?

To his surprise, on the following afternoon his wife appeared. She came and sat by the bed, and said:—

"Going on all right?"

He nodded. She looked uneasily around, then whispered:—

"You needn't have taken on like that. Ted's going off to America to-morrow—fulfilling engagements."

Jim stared at the ceiling, then closed his eyes. Ted no longer interested him. He wanted Annie, and he could not ask for her. Clara stayed a few moments, chatted with the nurse, and vanished. Why had she come? Later in the day he was removed to the operating theatre, and they reset his jaw. The shift of time again became uncertain. A long while later, he remembered a kindly-faced man in a white overall saying:—

"Well, old chap, who struck you this blow?"

He bent his ear down to Jim's lips, and the latter managed to reply:—

"A stranger."

Isaac came, hurried and concerned, and pressed his hand.

"Well, well, I've found you, old friend! A neighbour told me. Distressing indeed. They say you must not talk. Well, what can I do?"

Jim indicated with his hands that he wished to write something down. Isaac produced an envelope and a pencil, and Jim wrote:—

"*Go and see my little gal Annie send her to me keep an eye on her.*"

Isaac nodded gravely, and went away.

There appeared an eternity of time before the child came, but when she did all his dark forebodings vanished. She came smiling up the ward, and kissed him. They held each other's hands for a long time before she spoke.

" They would not tell me where you were. It was old Mr. Rubens. Oh, Daddy, are you getting better ? "

Yes, he was getting better. Much better. During the last two minutes he had improved enormously. He felt that he could speak. He managed to mumble :—

" How are you, my love ? "

" All right. Mother has been very cross. That horrid man has gone away. Mr. Rubens said you hurt your face. How did it happen, Daddy ? "

" I slipped on the stairs, my dear, and fell."

Annie's eyes opened very wide, but she did not speak. He knew by her manner that she did not believe him. At the back of her eyes there still lurked something of that horror which haunted them on the night when she had discovered " that horrid man " embracing her mother. It was the same night that her father " slipped on the stairs." The child was too astute to dissociate the two incidents, but she did not want to distress him.

" I shall come every day," she announced.

He smiled gratefully. She stayed and chatted with him until the Sister proclaimed that visitors were to depart.

FROM that day the convalescence of Jim Canning, although slow, was assured. Annie and Isaac Rubens were regular visitors, but during the seven weeks he remained in hospital Clara only visited him twice, and that was to arrange about money. On the day that he was discharged he had drawn his last five pounds from the bank.

" Never mind, never mind," he thought to himself. " We'll soon get that back."

And within a few days he was again trundling his barrow along the streets, calling out in his rather high *tremolo* voice : " Old iron ! Old iron ! "

There followed after that a long period in the life of the Canning family which is usually designated as " humdrum." With the departure of Ted Woollams, Clara settled down into a listless prosecution of her domestic routine. She seldom spoke to her husband, except to nag him, or to grumble about their reduced circumstances ; and these for a time were in a very serious state. For months the financial position remained precarious. A period of hunger and ill-temper and sudden ugly brawls. But gradually Jim began again to get it under control. Clara had not lost her taste for good living, but she was kept in check by the lack of means. She was furtive, sullen, and resentful. Jim insisted that whatever they had to go without, Annie was to continue with her schooling.

They never spoke of Ted Woollams, but Jim knew that he had only gone away for four or five months. Jim struggled on through the winter months, out in all weathers in his thin and battered coat. Sometimes twinges of rheumatism distorted his face, but he mentioned it to no one, not even Isaac.

It was in April that a sudden and dramatic change came into Jim's life. One morning he was alone in the shop, struggling with the unsolvable problem of getting things straight and sorted out. Beneath a bed he came across a jumble of indescribable things : bits of iron and broken pots, odd boots, sections of brackets, nameless odd-shaped remnants covered with dust and grime. He sighed. He remembered this lot quite well. He had picked it up at the end of a sale for a few shillings ; not that they appealed to him as a good bargain, but because he did not want to feel that he had completely wasted his day. He had brought them back and dumped them under the bed, intending to go through them later on. That was many months ago, long before he had been to the hospital, and there they had remained ever since.

Jim's ideas of dusting were always a little perfunctory. With a small feather brush he flicked clouds of dust from one object to another. No, there was nothing here of any value, though that piece of embroidery might fetch five shillings, and the small oblong box which someone had painted inside and out a dark green might be worth a little more. He picked it up and examined it. A ridiculous notion to paint iron ! But there, people were fools, particularly his customers. Of course, it might be copper or brass. In that case it would be worth more. He pulled out a long jack-knife and scraped the surface. The paint was old, but incredibly thick. It must have had a dozen coats or so. When he eventually got down to the surface he found a dark blue colour.

" Um ! " thought Jim. " That's a funny thing."

And he scraped a little more, and found some brown and white.

" That's enamel," he said out loud ; " an enamel box. Um ! I'll show that to Isaac. An enamel box might be worth several pounds."

He put the box on one side, and continued tidying up. That evening, after supper, he wrapped the box up in a piece of newspaper and took it round to his friend.

Isaac adjusted his thickest glasses and examined the spot where Jim had scratched. Then he went to the door and called out : —

" Lizzie, bring me some turpentine."

When the turpentine was brought, Isaac began to work away at the surface with a rag and penknife.

It took him nearly half an hour to reveal a complete corner of the box. Then he sat back and examined it through a microscope. Jim waited patiently. At last Isaac put it down and tapped the table.

"This," he said, deliberately, "is a Limoges enamel box of the finest period. It is copper inlaid with enamel. It is an amazing find. Where did you obtain it?"

"I bought it at a sale of the effects of an old lady named Brandt, at Greenwich. She died intestate, and had no relatives."

"You are in luck's way, Jim Canning."

"But why was it painted dark green?"

"There are many mysteries in our profession. It was probably stolen, many years ago—possibly a century ago. The thief knew that the piece was too well known to attempt to dispose of for some time. So for security he painted it in order to hide it. Then something happened. He may have died, or been sent to prison. The box passed into other hands. Nobody worried about it. It was just an old iron box. It has probably been lying in a lumber-room for years."

"It's been lying in my shop for five months. Is it worth a great deal, Isaac?"

Isaac thoughtfully stroked his chin.

"I am of opinion that if it is undamaged, and if the rest of it is up to the standard of this part we have disclosed, it is worth many thousand pounds."

Jim looked aghast.

"But I only gave six-and-sixpence for the lot!"

"It is the fortune of our profession."

The upshot of it was that Jim left the box in Isaac's hands to deal with as he saw fit. At first Isaac wished to waive the question of commission, but when Jim pointed out that but for Isaac's superior knowledge he would probably have sold it for a five-pound note, the Jew agreed to sell it on a ten per cent. basis. Fair bargaining on both sides.

Jim returned home, almost dazed by the news. Was it fair to obtain such a large sum of money in such a way? He had done nothing to deserve it. And yet—who should have it, if not he? The old lady had not even any relations. She was an eccentric who lived alone with a crowd of cats. An enamel box was no attraction to a cat.

HE said nothing about his find to his wife or to Annie He did not wish to buoy them up with false hopes. Perhaps, after all, Isaac might be mistaken, or he might have over-valued the object. A thousand pounds! A dazzling sum. Why, he could almost retire upon it to—Shorwell Green, where it was so quiet and peaceful. But no! Clara would not agree to that. The Camden Road! He detested the Camden Road, but still, there it was. Clara was his wife.

He went back to his work as though nothing had happened. Weeks went by, and Jim heard nothing about the enamel box; and then, one morning, he received a note from Isaac asking him to call round at once.

When he entered his friend's shop he knew that something exceptional had happened. Isaac was excited. He glowed and smiled, and was almost jocular.

"Come into my little room," he said.

When they were seated, he elaborately produced a cheque from his vest-pocket and handed it across the table to Jim.

"Here is your little share. I have kept my commission."

It was a cheque for £4,140. Isaac had sold it for £4,600 to a well-known collector.

The rest of that day was like a dream to Jim. Truly, he returned and pretended to be busy. In the afternoon he even went out and trundled his barrow, calling out, "Old iron! Old iron!" but he did it more by force of habit.

"I need not do this any more," he thought. His mind was occupied with many visions. It was a bright spring day, with light, fleecy clouds scudding above the chimney-pots. How beautiful it would be in that Sussex vale! The flowers would be out, and the young pollard-willows reflected in the cool streams. Pleasant to lie on the bank and fish, and forget this grimy life. And Annie, racing hither and thither, picking the buttercups and marguerites, and nestling by his side. He could do all this. Freedom! Freedom, by one of those queer twists of fate.

And yet he dreaded breaking the news to Clara. She would immediately demand a complete social upheaval. A new house, new furniture, luxuries, and parties, and social excitements. He arrived home late. During supper he was very silent.

"I will tell her afterwards," he thought. Annie was in bed. She should be told to-morrow. But to-night it must be broken to Clara. After all, it was true, she *was* his wife. It was the fair thing to do. He tried to recall the moments of passion and tenderness of the early days of their honeymoon, but all the other ugly visions kept dancing before his eyes. He lighted his pipe and gazed around the untidy room. Perhaps she would improve. Perhaps the changed conditions would soften her, and make her more amenable. But still she was his wife, and if she wished to live in the Camden Road, well——

It was nearly dark, and Clara went out of the room humming. She seemed peculiarly cheerful to-night. Almost as if she knew. He fingered the cheque in his breast-pocket. She had gone upstairs—probably to fetch a

novel. She adored a certain kind of novel. When she came down he would lay the cheque on the table and say :—

"Look, Clara ! See what has happened to us ! "

And then he would be a little tender with her, try to make her understand how he felt. They would start all over again.

And then happened a variant of that hypothetical case described at the beginning of this story. Only in this case it was the woman who went out.

Jim was sitting there with his fingers on the cheque that was to be their means of reconciliation, and with the tears already banked in his unuttered speech, when Clara put her head in at the door. She had her hat on. She said :—

"I'm going to the post."

Jim removed his hand from his breast-pocket. He sat back, and heard the door slam.

"I'll tell her when she comes in."

But Clara never came in. He waited half an hour, and then he thought :—

"She's gone to some dissipation with a friend. Oh, well, I must wait up till she returns, I suppose. I'm sorry she has disappointed me on — a night like this, though."

He sat dreaming in the chair, till he became suddenly painfully aware of cold. It was quite dark. He lighted the gas. It was one o'clock. He felt his heart beating with a physical dread. Something had happened to Clara. Perhaps she had been run over, at the very moment when everything was going to change for the better for her. He blundered his way out into the hall, where a gas-jet flickered feebly, and groped for his

"I am of opinion that if it is undamaged it is worth many thousand pounds."

overcoat. On it he found a note pinned. He turned up the gas higher, and read :—

" I'm going off to Ted Woollams. I'm sick of you and the stinking little house. Ted's made a bit in America, and I give you the address. You can do what you like about it, but it's no good you ever trying to get me back. " CLARA."

It was characteristic of Jim Canning that this note made him cry. He was so sensitive to its utter callousness and ingratitude. Then he dabbed his eyes with his old red handkerchief and went upstairs. He tapped on Annie's door; then he opened it, and said, quietly :—

" Annie, it's all right, my dear. It's only me. May I come in ? "

The sleeping child was awake abruptly. She held out her arms.

" I ought not to have woke you up, my love, only I felt a little—lonely. Annie, would you like to come away with me to a beautiful place in the country, where it's all woods and flowers and little streams ? "

" Oh, Daddy, yes ! And would there be lambs, too, and little black pigs and brown calves ? "

" Yes, my dear, all those things; and birds too, and quietness and freedom."

" But, Daddy, could we ? "

" Yes, dear ; I've had some good luck."

Annie was very wide awake now, and she sat up and clapped her hands.

" Oh, Daddy, when can we go ? "

" Quite soon, my dear. Perhaps in a few weeks."

When he had closed the door he dabbed his eyes again, and thought :—

" It was unthinking of me. I oughtn't to have woke her up ; but—she is all I have."

A WEEK later he wrote to Clara :—

" Dear Clara,—I understand that for the last week you have been living with Ted Woollams. I do not critticize your action. We are all as God made us. I shall in the dew course take divorse proceedings not as a act of hostillity to you but that you may marry the man of your choice and be respectable. I also shall share with you the result of a good deal last week in order that you may not want and so close with check for £2070. I think this fair.

" JIM."

It was Isaac who helped him over all the difficult problems which occurred at that time, and it was Isaac who persuaded him that he was overdoing the " fairness " to Clara. He said that, in the circumstances, he had no moral obligations to Clara, and that £500 would be lavish. So in the end Jim altered the cheque to that amount. It was Isaac who took over the little shop, which he used as a kind of dumping-ground for his superfluous stock. And it was Isaac who, a year after, returned letters addressed to Jim in a handwriting he recognized, " Gone away. Address not known." And it was he who, in later years, bore the brunt of the wild invective of a drunken harridan who said that her husband had deserted her and would not hand her any of the fortune he must have inherited. He shook his head sadly and replied that he knew nothing. Mr. Canning and his daughter had left London. He thought they had gone to Australia.

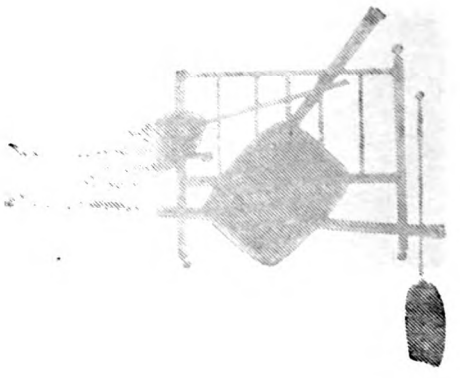
When she had gone, he said to himself :—

" It would distress Jim to know that a woman who had once been his wife had sunk to such a condition."

As he passed through to the room at the back he smiled, and thought :—

" How fortunate she did not come in here ! "

On the table was a large bowl of red and white roses, with the label and card still lying on the table. On the card was inscribed, " With love to Uncle Isaac.—A." The postmark on the label was a village in Sussex.



The Decay of the Villain

By

E. T. RAYMOND

Author of "Uncensored Celebrities," etc.

SOME time ago I remarked on the grave paucity of really satisfactory fiction heroines. The degeneracy of the villain is even more depressing; where there are still ten passable heroines one can hardly find one reasonably competent villain.

The decline of villainy is, of course, only part of a general decay—the decay of that once glorious thing, melodrama. In my heart of hearts I believe that all good people still love melodrama; I would myself go anywhere to see a really fine specimen. But those authors who might be competent to write fine melodrama—it is really one of the greatest of the arts, and Shakespeare was its greatest professor—will not do it.

The tiniest twig of a fact can be traced back to some mighty hidden root, and it would be easy to connect this falling off of villainy with the weakening of a set of ideas which once despotically ruled all mankind worth talking about. Melodrama, the dramatic flower of which the bud was the old religious play in which the vices and virtues were personified, belongs essentially to a world of faith, a world which believes in a perpetual conflict of which the soul of man is the battlefield, and believes, moreover, that man himself has the will and power to determine that conflict as he pleases.

The capital letters which our fathers employed for Good and Evil were not used simply for ornament; they were meant to express capital facts. Good was Good and Evil was Evil; each had shape and limit, and, as it were, went about in its own skin. When men believed in God and the Devil in much the same way that I believe in Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George (there is no political acerbity behind this purely chance comparison), they naturally tended to divide decisively the supposed followers of each. The "Coalition mind" did not exist. The sheep were on one side, the goats on the other.

But when God and the Devil are disestablished in favour of something called biological necessity, and microbes are feared much more than demons, it is natural that the old sharp distinction between good people and bad people should be blurred. "Goodness" tends to be little more than good luck; badness can always be excused as misfortune. At the Old Bailey, indeed, they are old-fashioned enough to ignore the philosophical tendency of the time. If I have forged a cheque it will be an insufficient defence that there is no such thing as free will. If I have chopped my grandmother to pieces I cannot plead in mitigation the pressure of an unjust social environment.

Even in private life most of us do see some people as good and some as bad; we won't cash cheques for one man, or invite another to dinner. But few of us have the

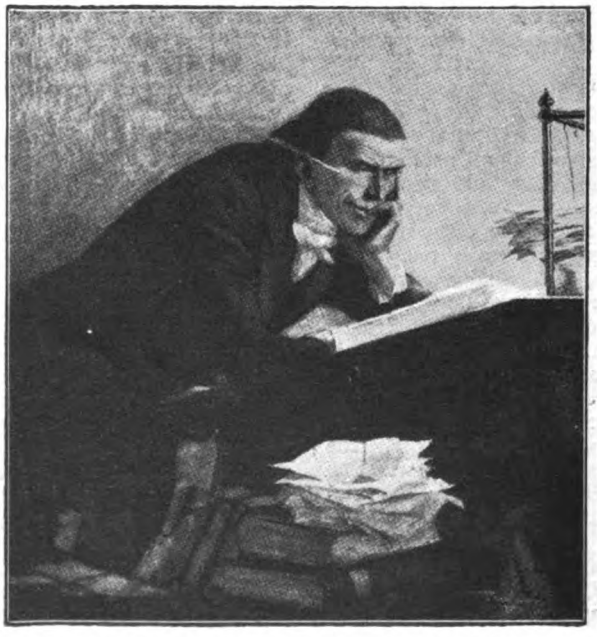
courage to say, as our fathers did, that there are real villains, men and women utterly bad, human wolves, tigers, or serpents, whose light is darkness, and whose deeds are always evil. We don't like morally unpleasant people, just as we don't like men with a chronic snuffle. But we do feel that they are not quite accountable.

Now, the old author and reader had none of this uncertainty. They felt that people could be as good or bad as they liked, and that a low bank balance, or the shape of his head, or the state of his thyroid gland, was no excuse for a man's villainy. To hate a villain was as much a Christian duty as to respect a saint. The good man is always depicted as equally ready to help a lame dog over a stile or a "rogue to the gallows." The one is no more an act of grace than the other.

The real villain in the old novels was, in a word, the Devil, represented by one or more persons assumed to be in his personal service. The real villains in the modern intellectual novel are nature, "red in tooth and claw," the social system, and economic law—all cloudy things presenting no very definite surface for a kick. One could make a real being of Satan, and the ancient moralist twisted his spiked tail with the zeal of an American patriot. But a germ or the law of exchanges has no tail to twist, and if we are only automata it is clearly as irrational to blame some poor mortal for a hereditary tendency to murder as to blame another for a weak chest. Hence the modern toleration. Hence, also, the modern pessimism. In abolishing the black devil, we have bred legions of blue devils. The old cheerfulness has gone with the old downrightness.

For the old novelists were very downright. Whatever they might do in the way of villainy themselves, they were sincerely down on villainy in the printed sheet. Lytton was not precisely a model character, but one would never guess it from his novels, where the villains invariably have a bad time. Dickens has no trace of pity for his wicked men, and not much for his wicked women. He gloats over the doom of Fagin. He rejoices almost indecently after he has contrived that Dennis, the hangman, shall be himself "worked off." It is with utter gusto that he brings the old house in "Little Dorrit" crashing on the wicked foreigner, whose moustache went up and whose nose went down—a character who, by the way, illustrates rather aptly the simplicity of view already noted, for Dickens says of him, through a Frenchwoman, that he is one of those "people who have no good in them—none; people whom it is necessary to detest without compromise; people who must be dealt with as enemies of the human race; people who must be crushed like savage beasts and cleared out of the way."

Then, again, we have the extraordinary relish Dickens shows over the deaths of the dry and relentless lawyer Tulkinghorn, the mean murderer Jonas Chuzzlewit, and the detestable schemer Carker, the "man with white teeth." Even his comic villains affect him with a spirit of savage vindictiveness. Silas Wegg, soused in a cartful of scavenger's mud; Mr. Pecksniff, struck down by a walking-stick ("which I have every reason to believe has Knobs on it"); Mantalini, condemned to a "dem'd horrid grind" at the mangle—the reader, grateful for his entertainment, feels no malice against any of them. But Dickens did. He honestly detested them, and pursued them to the last chapter with real venom.



URIAH HEEP, IN "DAVID COPPERFIELD."

"DICKENS HAS NO TRACE OF PITY FOR HIS WICKED MEN."

Now conceive Mr. H. G. Wells setting out to re-write Dickens. We should not be asked to kick Uriah Heep when he was down; we should be rather invited to consider him the victim of a vicious scheme of education. Mr. Snagsby, with his sovereign

(or rather half-crown) cure for human ills, would be simply an idiot vaguely troubled by a social conscience.

Mr. Pickwick would certainly not be an admirable character. Mr. Wells would make short work of his 'benevolence, which after all was only rendered possible by an unblushing "exploitation" of the workers, since Mr. Pickwick had admittedly large private means. The brothers Cheeryble would share much the same fate. Half the Dickens good characters, in short, would come out as at least semi-villains; half the villains, especially the offenders against sex morality, would be at worst let off with a caution; and the worst villains of all would be permitted to plead that they had never had a real chance. The real villain would be the social system, and the specially "good" would be arraigned as its dupes or as its designing apologists.

Thackeray, as something of a society man, tended rather to social than to moral divisions, and, though inherently more old-fashioned in many ways than Dickens, more closely resembles the modern writer in the poverty of his villains and the unreliability of his heroes. Barnes Newcome is the nearest approach he has to a true villain, and there is something rather unconvincing and unnatural in his development from an average man of the world to an emphatically bad lot. But occasionally Thackeray, like Dickens, gets angry, and belabours his less engaging characters; no writer could make less pretence to that "divine impartiality" which was the boast of a later school.

SIR FRANCIS LEVISON, IN "EAST LYNNE."

"A SUPERBLY COMPLETE VILLAIN—BOLD, BAD, AND BARONETICAL."

Curiously enough, the Victorian women novelists of the higher class were more tolerant of villains than the men. Thus George Eliot showed a good deal of the modern tendency to mix up vice and virtue; she started with a quite well-meaning person (I am thinking specially of the young squire in "Adam Bede"), and turned him, more or less expostulating, into a villain. Charlotte Brontë carried a little further the business of mingling the *rôles*; she takes an undoubted Victorian villain, a libertine in practice, bigamist in intention, and transforms him, without any expostulation on his part, into a most undoubted hero.

But Charlotte Brontë was an exceptional woman and an exceptional writer. When we come to the lesser lights of Victorian literature we find that they, like Dickens, are incapable of compromise. Their bad people are bad, wholly bad, and nothing but bad, and bad by their own fault, without any mitigating circumstances of ancestry, education, or insufficient finance. They reaped the hemp they sowed, and it served them right.

Thus Mrs. Henry Wood, in "East Lynne," has a superbly complete villain in Sir Francis Levison—bold, bad, and baronetical. He is actually described as 'that bold, bad man"—that famous phrase is not an invention of

satire—and we are told that he spoke in a "tone of thrilling gentleness, gratifying to the ear, but dangerous to the heart." It was highly dangerous to Lady Isabel, married to Mr. Carlyle, an honest country lawyer who, the author is careful to explain, had been "educated as a gentleman."

Levison persuades Lady Isabel that her husband does not love her. "Be revenged on that false hound," he whispers passionately in her ear, and it is at this stage that the "bold-bad man dared to put his arm round her." Levison, after treating Lady Isabel very badly, is arrested for murder while standing for Parliament, and duly hanged till he is dead. He was a quite extraordinarily effective villain; he had sold seventy-five thousand "East Lynnes" up to 1877, the date of my copy. He was dark—the "blond beast" was then unheard of, and all the desirable qualities went with blue eyes, and hair of the colour of untwisted rope—and he wore a "magnificent diamond ring" on one of the fingers of a very white hand. It would be thought rather loud and Hebraic nowadays.

The readers of Miss Braddon were also sure of very accomplished villains; she was even daring enough to invent a beautiful female villain, and, above all, to endow her with golden hair. But rather weakly Lady Audley was also given a touch of insanity; it would have been so much more satisfactory had she pushed one man down a well and tried to burn another from sheer badness. Miss Braddon is guilty of another weakness over Steeve Hargreaves; after admitting that he is half an idiot she makes him wholly a villain and hangs him without mercy; "the gallows outside York Castle ended the life of a man who had never been either help or comfort to any one of his fellow-creatures." That might be. But what was his counsel doing not to plead insanity?

More convincing are the villains of Wilkie Collins. In "The Woman in White" he has the brilliant idea of creating a very fat villain, Count Fosco. Fat is, with most authors, a sign of virtue, at least of harmlessness; Collins, much daring, succeeded in connecting obesity with thorough-going wickedness. Despite his weight, however, Fosco was dignified, magnificently regular in features, and grandly calm in expression—a sort of elderly Napoleon. There is a touch of prophetic feminism in his portrayal: he "got round" women by talking to them "as seriously and sensibly" as if they were men. The Count, whose huge body is finally seen behind the glass at the Morgue, in Paris, is an excellent example of the well-bred, Machiavellian Continental villain—a type unhappily extinct and likely to remain so.

For it was necessary that such a villain should be, if not actually French or Italian, at least touched with Latin culture. It was necessary that, sooner or later, a blunt Englishman should seize him by the throat and say "You damned Frenchman." The politeness due to an Ally will no longer permit of this treatment. Our villains must now be Germanic, and a German villain can never have the requisite qualities of finesse. The villains of the war books show the difficulty. They are painstakingly wicked. But they have none of the thrill that attached to the gracefully feline Continental villain of other times.

COUNT FOSCO.
IN "THE WOMAN IN WHITE."

"WILKIE COLLINS SUCCEEDED IN CONNECTING OBESITY WITH THOROUGH-GOING WICKEDNESS."

A still better villain, perhaps, was Godfrey Ablewhite, of "The Moonstone," whose introduction suggests the under-current of revolt against Victorian goody-goodyness. It was, in fact, rather daring of Wilkie Collins at that time to make a pillar of philanthropy both thief and libertine. We get the same point, more viciously made, in Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," when young

Alec D'Urberville gets "converted." But D'Urberville has hardly enough brains to be a good villain; he is only an evil appetite.

Robert Louis Stevenson did not disdain the villain. John Silver is a vigorous essay in one genre; he is as thoroughly villainous as anybody in Dickens. But there is this difference: Dickens detested his Quilps and Rigauds; Stevenson most evidently liked Long John. We have the same feeling regarding the Master of Ballantrae, Stevenson's most carefully drawn villain. The reader's sympathy (following the author's) is all on his side, wicked as he may be. He is so much more of a man than the rather colourless brother, on whom he takes his protracted vengeance.

As we come nearer our own time the manufacture of villains falls manifestly within a lower plane of literary industry. The Hall Caine villain may be represented by Lord Robert Ure, the vicious man about town, an example of the infamy of the "lavender-gloved tribe." He was "engulfed in a high stiff collar," which should have sufficed to keep him out of mischief, and he had a habit of "screwing an eyeglass into his eye"; rather ugly, with soft, sleepy eyes, he was (despite his innate caddishness) "fit for good society, with the stamp of good breeding." When he finds his way of life attacked by John Storm, the clerical hero, he retaliates in a curious fashion. He buys John's church and builds a music-hall on its site. Very up-to-date in his time, Lord Robert Ure is now as antique as the Assyrian bulls in the British Museum. He owed his momentary vogue to the singular notion that he was sketched from the life, and a typical representative of a whole class of "society" profligates.

Mr. Anthony Hope has done much to keep alive the old tradition of villainy. Some of his villains are subtle, like the Pasha in "Phroso." Others are given to a dashing taste in homicide. Rupert of Hentzau is obviously "after"—some would say a long way after—Dumas. He has points, however. He is handsome, he smiles a smile of wicked and elegant satire, and laughs softly, to the discomfiture of all true men; he gets through all the drudgery of his wickedness—blackmail included—with distinction and finesse. Finally, he is an incomparable swordsman, and reminds you constantly that the devil is a gentleman, with a weakness for gentlemen.

But there is one vulnerable point about Mr. Hope as a villain-author; he shares it with Mr. Stanley Weyman and others of the modern swashbuckler school. He lets his villains off on inadequate grounds. We get worked up to a situation in which the villain is quite powerless. The hero is on top of him; he has his pistol at the villain's forehead; he could kill the villain as easily as he could shell peas. But the villain is wanted for another run. Therefore "psychology" comes in, since nothing else will avail. The hero suddenly feels that he "cannot kill this man," and lets him go, to be a source of endless distress till the last chapter.

Now Dumas never made any such mistake. Dumas knew plenty about psychology when he wanted it; note the skill with which the musketeers are differentiated in every act and word during thirty years of change. But he knew also that if the exigencies of the story demand that the villain shall writhe his way out of his captor's clutches the thing must be done properly, and with good reason shown. Miladi escapes when she seems to be at the end of her tether. So does Mordaunt. But Miladi works for several chapters on Felton, and there is always a real reason if Athos has compunction in disposing of Mordaunt. Nobody is stopped in full hue and cry by this sudden

LONG JOHN SILVER, IN "TREASURE ISLAND."

"HE IS AS THOROUGHLY VILLAINOUS AS ANYBODY IN DICKENS."

conviction, that the thing simply can't be done.

A good deal of fiction "psychology," indeed, is much on a par with that of Nicholas Nickleby's play. "Just as you are raising the pistol to your head a clock strikes ten. You pause. You recollect to have heard a clock strike ten in your infancy. The pistol falls from your hand—you are overcome—you burst into tears, and become a virtuous and exemplary character for ever afterwards."

Mr. Le Queux and Mr. Oppenheim share what is almost a corner in the spy villain. There was a day when the now-forgotten sensationalist, Hugh Conway, seemed likely to establish a fame of his own in this line; his Macari in "Called Back" was a most efficient monster, who mingled a taste for private murder with a passion for political assassination. Mr. Le Queux competently carries on the tradition. His villains are generally of whatever nationality happens to be unpopular for the moment. Once on a time they were Czarist Russians; now they are probably Bolshevists. One fears there was a time when they were mainly French; during most of the war they were certainly German. In periods of perfect international amity Mr. Le Queux falls back on Italy; Italian villains never stale.

Of the greater writers of the day, Mr. Conrad alone maintains a high standard of villainy. Possibly the disillusioned public will take more villainy from the South Seas than from the home counties; at any rate, outlandish villainy is more easy to work, and the results pan out more convincingly in proportion to the trouble taken. Schomberg, in "Victory," is probably the best of all German villains. With "blinking, cushioned eyes, thick lips, very chestnut beard, looking full of malice," his chief characteristic is vindictiveness. His villainy is truly of the first order, but as he is a real study, and not a mere bogey-man invented for war service, he displays the limitations of the Teuton.

MACARI, IN "CALLED BACK."

"HUGH CONWAY'S SPY VILLAIN WAS A MOST EFFICIENT MONSTER."

That is to say, there is an element of stupidity in his wickedness; his schemes are ingenious and painstaking, but they are always marred by a very German conceit and a very German ill-temper. Mr. Conrad's desperadoes, though magnificent of their kind, hardly rise to the rank of true villains. The true villain must be capable of a complicated effort sustained throughout the book, or he does not convince; every honest reader knows from his inward monitor how easy it must be to perform detached masterpieces in villainy, and only a plot that extends over three hundred pages can really rouse his admiration.

We now come to a class of people who ought to be villains and are not. Mr. Wells is responsible for many of them. They do everything that the old villain used to do. They make not the smallest pretence to morality. They lie, and thieve, and misconduct themselves in the most unabashed way. But Mr. Wells will not have them as villains. Instead, he invests them with quite lovable qualities, and refuses to admit any justice in their ending up at Wormwood Scrubs. Thus Uncle Ponderevo, in "Tono Bungay," is a thoroughly bad lot, by all the old standards of fiction rectitude. He appropriates trust-money, becomes a millionaire company promoter, and finally flies the country as a fraudulent bankrupt.

Dickens would have killed him in a wood, like Tigg Montagu, or made him commit suicide in a warm bath, like Mr. Merdle. Almost any of the old novelists would have made an example of him. Mr. Wells gives him an exceedingly likeable personality; he would have us know that there are plenty of worse men about, and that he is only one of the many works of Mr. Wells's real villain, the social order.

There is Mr. Britling, again. He has done nothing to bring him within the criminal law. But his self-confessed irregularities would certainly bring

an old house down on him, or get him cut to pieces by an express, if Dickens were arbiter of his fate. Mr. Wells, on the other hand, makes him the only really sensible and right-feeling man in the book. Mr. Britling thinks and feels for everybody; he "puts us all right," for all the world as if he were Mr. Dick.

I can only recall one person remotely resembling a villain in Mr. Wells—Prince Somebody in "The War in the Air." Mr. Wells must have disliked him, or he would not have spattered him about so much with an explosive bullet.

Mr. Wells is always merciful to sinners; it is the righteous alone who sometimes upset his impartiality. To him a villain is no more a villain than a cockroach is a pest in the eye of Mother Nature; he is only a bit of common humanity, acted on by the acid of circumstance.

SCHOMBERG, IN "VICTORY."

"PROBABLY THE BEST OF ALL GERMAN VILLAINS."

Mr. Arnold Bennett, on another plane, takes a similar view. His Denry Machin would be pure villain on the old valuation. He begins by falsifying his marks at school, goes on to tamper with his employers' papers, becomes an unregistered moneylender, breaks off his engagement by a trick, and bribes a footman to cause an opportune carriage accident. But to Mr. Bennett he is not in the least a villain; he is simply a man of business with more than average push and go.

Mr. Bennett's novels teem with rogues; they possess no villain; people like Machin are no more villains, in the fiction sense, than Gil Blas, who also did many things deserving jail, and came out calmly triumphant and perfectly respectable and self-respecting.

With Mr. Hornung (whose death we have just had to lament) the "divine impartiality" of the Wells–Bennett school is left behind. The villain is no longer treated with scientific calm, but is invested with sentiment, and actually made the hero. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle occasionally introduced a sympathetic criminal, but was steadily on the side of the angels of law and order, represented by Sherlock Holmes and the respectable Dr. Watson. The sympathetic criminal might, as a special favour, be allowed to die without the rope, or even without the handcuffs, but he had to go under somehow.

With Raffles we are in a very different world. Raffles is the villain as hero. He, and not those he preys on, or those who strive to check his preying, asks and receives sympathy. Raffles marks the full extent of the distance we have travelled from the days of Fagin and Bill Sikes. And it is curious to recall that Dickens was attacked, among others by Thackeray (who wrote in reproof the repulsive "Catherine"), for making crime attractive.

But it needs not the extreme case of Raffles to illustrate the woeful decay of the older kind of villain. I can quite understand the refusal of the serious novelist to recognize the villain as a separate human sub-species. But why the unabashed story-teller should be so affected by a literary fashion set in higher quarters I have never been able to understand. For undoubtedly there is a latent demand for villains. I have even known modern young women read through "The Wandering Jew" because, once well embarked on the Amazonian current of Rodin's villainy, they simply had to follow the stream. And Sue's novel is about equal in bulk to the letter A in the "Encyclopædia Britannica."

We have sketchy villains, of course, in plenty; the cheap article seems still to be a commercial "proposition." But the elaborate jewelled and engine-turned villain apparently does not repay the trouble of manufacture. It seems a pity. For some of the old villains were really very, very good—in their day.

Mr. Cray's Adventures

by

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY S. ABBEY.

No. VIII.

"The Invincible Truth."

MR. CRAY, his short and rather fat legs dangling in mid-air, was seated on a grey stone wall which bordered a portion of the Corniche Road, smoking a very good cigar, at peace with himself and the world. About a hundred yards lower down, his chauffeur was engaged in tedious but necessary repairs to the limousine car drawn up under the shadow of a eucalyptus tree. Mr. Cray was not in the least hurry to resume his journey. Motoring in these lofty altitudes made no great appeal to him. He was thoroughly contented here, basking in the warm sunlight, enjoying his cigar, and lazily speculating as to the doings of a mysterious crowd of people of whom he could catch glimpses every now and then, moving about behind the trees on the other side of the road.

A gate exactly opposite to him, leading into an orchard, was suddenly opened, and a young woman made her unexpected appearance. She was apparently English, she was becomingly dressed, pretty, although obviously addicted to the use of strange cosmetics, and she crossed the road towards him with a friendly smile. Mr. Cray, whose sole desire at that moment was for companionship, raised his hat.

"Good morning," he ventured.

"Good morning," she replied, pleasantly. "I wonder if you have such a thing as an English match? I can't get these horrid French things to strike."

Mr. Cray produced at once a well-filled box.

"Help yourself," he invited, generously. "Fill your own box if you've got one. There's very little in this quarter of the globe that isn't good enough for Joseph P. Cray, but the match proposition is about as bad a one as ever I've struck."

The young lady accepted his offer without demur, lit a cigarette, and leaped nimbly on to the wall by his side.

"So your name is Joseph P. Cray?" she remarked, affably. "You're American, of course? My name is Daisy Lindel. Ever seen me?"

Mr. Cray shook his head regretfully.

"I can't say that I have," he admitted. "I've a pretty good memory for faces like

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yours, too. Have you been in these parts long ? "

She laughed gaily.

" I didn't mean seen me about. I meant on the films."

" God bless my soul ! " Mr. Cray exclaimed. " That's what all those people are doing on the other side of the wood, I suppose. Accounts for your make-up, too."

The young lady nodded, taking out a pocket looking-glass and studying herself.

" I do look pretty beastly, don't I ? " she observed, dabbing her face here and there with a handkerchief. " I'd have explained

when I came up, but I thought you knew what we were doing."

" That's all right," Mr. Cray assured her. " Glad of your company. I can see you've got a real pretty face under your make-up."

" You Americans are so forward," she murmured.

" We know good things when we see them," Mr. Cray declared. " Doing a film, eh ? Well, that's interesting. What's the story ? "

" Too long to tell you," she replied. " The point is, there's a murder at that cottage opposite, and the body's dragged out into that wood. They've been hauling a poor fellow about there until he declares he hasn't a sound bone in his body."

" Pretty strenuous, that," Mr. Cray remarked. " Kind of peaceful place for a murder."

They both gazed at the little dwelling opposite. It was a long, one-storey, peasant's cottage half covered with a flowering creeper, with a small garden in front and a gate leading into the orchard.

" Just the kind of place," the girl murmured, " to make one feel really sentimental. One can imagine a perfect love story being lived there, so different from our sordid little flirtations and make-believes."

She looked dreamily across the strip of dusty road and sighed. Mr. Cray sighed, too.

" Love is such a wonderful thing," she said, softly.

" Sure ! " Mr. Cray agreed.

" Are you married ? " she asked, withdrawing her eyes from the clematis-wreathed porch, and gazing into his clean-shaven, good-natured face.

Mr. Cray coughed.

" In a kind of way," he admitted. " That is to say, my wife likes to live in Indiana State."

" Where is that ? " she inquired.

" In the United States of America, way back across the Continent."

She looked at him pityingly.

" And you have to come over here all alone ! "

" Seems kinder hard luck, doesn't it ? " he said, cheerfully. " The fact is, I haven't been back home since the war. I was out in France with the Y.M.C.A., and when we got through I didn't feel I could face these new laws, monkeying up side-streets for your liquor, or taking a drink behind a screen at a chemist's. Most of my friends were coming across pretty regularly, so I just stayed over on this side."

" I see ! Aren't you very lonely sometimes, Mr. Cray ? "

He edged a little nearer.

" Sure ! " he admitted. " I love company, too. Whereabouts are you folk staying ? "

" At the Villa Hyacinth," she told him. " There's a bus runs every hour into Monte, and we have two cars as well, but we really aren't as far out as we seem."

" I'd like it if you could take a little dinner with me one night," Mr. Cray suggested, boldly.

" I'd like it, too," she assented. " I haven't many friends in the company. The producer's very nice, but he has his wife staying over at Nice, and I can't bear the man I do most of my scenes with. Are you free this evening ? "

" Sure ! " Mr. Cray agreed. " I'll fetch you if you say the word, or will you be at the Hôtel de Paris at eight o'clock ? "

" Hôtel de Paris ! How delightful ! " she exclaimed. " You needn't trouble to fetch

me, Mr. Cray, but I'd be glad if you'd take me home. Here comes our photographer. He's going to take some 'stills' of the cottage."

Mr. Cray nodded.

"Someone moving about inside," he remarked, looking at one of the windows.

The photographer arrived, exchanged greetings with the young lady, and adjusted his instrument on the other side of the wall, almost out of sight. He was still busy focusing when, from the side door of the cottage, a young man suddenly appeared, and with a couple of strides reached the middle of the road. He was neatly enough dressed in the blue smock and trousers of the peasant, but his whole appearance was dishevelled and passionate. His black hair was unkempt, his blue eyes were ablaze, his fists were clenched. He was like a man beside himself with anger. He was young, scarcely more than a boy, deeply sunburnt, and with powerful frame and shoulders. As he passed Mr. Cray and his companion he broke into a little stream of furious words. Then he sprang over the wall and disappeared, running down the hillside. Mr. Cray glanced after him, a little puzzled.

"Did you get that?" he asked the girl. "He talked too fast for me."

"I didn't understand a word," the young lady confessed. "My French isn't any good, any way."

She looked after the disappearing figure.

"He was terribly handsome," she observed. "I wish our camera man had been here."

Mr. Cray nodded.

"He seemed kinder flustered. I guess his *déjeuner* wasn't to his liking. These foreigners get so crazy over nothing."

"*Déjeuner*," the girl sighed. "Don't! I ate my sandwiches before eleven o'clock."

Mr. Cray smiled. His car had just come into sight, slowly rounding the hill.

"I guess I can fix that," he said. "I've a glass of white wine, and sandwiches enough for a crowd, in my car here."

The girl gazed at Mr. Cray's rotund figure and at the approaching motor. There was a look of adoration in her face.

"You are an angel," she declared. "From the moment I saw you on the wall, I felt that you were meant to bring happiness into my life. You are sure there will be enough sandwiches?"

Mr. Cray smiled confidently.

"I guess you will say so when you see the basket," he replied. "I'm taking a little trip alone to-day, but I expected a friend who had to go over to Nice at the last moment."

"Heaven bless your friend!" the girl exclaimed, fervently. "I am consumed with jealousy, but I will revenge myself by devouring her sandwiches."

"You don't need to worry any over my friend," Mr. Cray declared, as he opened the door of the car and stretched out his hand for the luncheon basket. "Peter Gibson, his name is, of the Gibson Shoe Company, out in Lynn. Some plant he owns, I can tell you."

"I love him for his sex," the young lady declared, accepting a sandwich from the very magnificent collection which Mr. Cray had spread out. "I should have hated you to have been faithless before we met."

MR. CRAY produced a bottle of wine and a corkscrew, and a very agreeable little picnic followed. The photographer, having completed his "stills," was summoned to join in the feast. The sandwiches were followed by cheese biscuits, and fruit which caused the young lady to scream with delight. The photographer took his tactful leave, and Miss Daisy Lindel, who had already explained to her companion at great length the precise reason why she was not playing lead in the present film, now proceeded to confide to him the cause of her family loss of fortune and her subsequent appearance upon the stage.

"The thought of this sort of thing," she declared, biting sorrowfully into a pear, "would have broken my father's heart. However, I'm happy enough. Work is good for us all, and I couldn't sit down and be the only one of my family to do nothing."

These side-lights upon the young lady's family history, and their agreeable little picnic, were suddenly broken into by a further untoward happening connected with the cottage opposite. The front door was thrown open and a woman ran screaming out into the road. Her hands were high above her head, her face seemed distorted with horror. She ran towards the two, shouting and gesticulating, pointing first to the cottage and then down the hill, across the field. Mr. Cray slipped off the wall.

"I can't get all she says," he told his companion, "but it seems that someone has been hurt in the cottage, and she is accusing the young man of having done it. I'd better go and see what's wrong. Jean, you rascal, come here."

The chauffeur made his appearance from the tree behind which he had been consuming his lunch. In something less than thirty seconds he and the woman were in the midst of an impassioned duet, and all three were on their way to the cottage. The young lady sat upon the wall and waited. Down the road came a peasant in a brown linen suit, riding a bicycle.

"It is François!" the woman shouted, waving to him. "Come to me, little one. A terrible thing has happened!"

They waited for François, a giant of over six feet, who dismounted from his bicycle and listened with ejaculations like pistol shots to a repetition of the woman's story. Then they all went into the cottage. The woman threw open the door of the little living-room. Then Mr. Cray saw that they were in the presence of tragedy.

THE room, almost painfully neat, was devoid of any signs of a struggle. The white stone floor was spotlessly clean. Strings of onions, a few birds, and a rabbit hung from a beam in the ceiling. There were antimacassars upon the oak chairs, a neat array of crockery upon the dresser. Seated in a high-backed chair was an old man with a long grey beard. His head was thrown back, his eyes and mouth were open. From the left side of his body protruded the hilt of a knife. There was a splash or two of blood upon the floor beneath and upon the side of the chair. He was without a doubt dead. As they saw him, the woman fainted, but recovered again almost immediately to join in the fierce chorus of questions and commentary. Mr. Cray lifted the man's wrist and felt it for a moment. Then he turned away, left the cottage, and walked back into the sunlight. The girl slipped from the wall and came towards him.

"What has happened?" she asked.

"What seems to be a murder," Mr. Cray answered, gravely. "There is an old man there quite dead. I think the woman is trying to say that he was stabbed by his son, the boy who ran past us across the field and into the wood."

"How horrible!" the girl exclaimed, turning suddenly pale. "In that cottage, too, where everything looks so peaceful! Why, it must have been done whilst we were sitting here talking. And that boy! He had such a beautiful face."

"I guess they're a queer, passionate lot, some of the country folk round here," Mr. Cray observed. "If I were you, young lady, I'd just get back to the others now. I guess I'd better go on to the village and get a doctor. Hôtel de Paris to-night at eight o'clock."

"Lovely!" the girl murmured.

They crossed the road together. Mr. Cray held open the gate which led into the wood.

"It's too bad this should have happened," he said. "Kind of broke up our little time together."

She was still pale, but she was rapidly recovering herself.

"Anyhow," she declared, "it has been the happiest half-hour I have had since we've been out here."

She made her way up through the trees with a parting wave of the hand. Mr. Cray turned back and entered the cottage.

AT a few minutes before eight that evening Miss Daisy Lindel descended from the omnibus which had brought her from the villa and entered the Hôtel de Paris. Mr. Cray was waiting for her, and together they made their way into the restaurant, where her new friend was received with the deep respect which his knowledge of food and wine, his urbane manner, his discreet but lavish tips earned for him in whatever restaurant he chose to patronize. The head-waiter himself, a very magnificent personage, conducted them to their well-chosen table. Half-a-dozen underlings, of various grades and offices, showed breathless interest in Mr. Cray's deliberately chosen dinner. A gasp of mingled relief and approval escaped from them when the menu was finally laid aside, the last word spoken. They melted away to give place to a solemn-looking functionary with a mayoral chain around his neck. To him Mr. Cray whispered only the magic words "Pommery '06," and then devoted his attention to his companion.

"I am so glad you recognized me without my make-up," she said.

"I should have recognized you anywhere," her host assured her. "Say, what did the rest of the company think about your coming out to dine with me?"

The girl, who was leaning towards her companion with her elbows on the table, twirled a ring absently around her finger once or twice. Then she looked suddenly up and smiled at him.

"I told an awful fib," she confessed, simply. "I told them that I knew you in London."

"Well, well!" Mr. Cray murmured, consolingly. "A little fib like that don't do anybody any harm. From henceforth the date of our acquaintance is fixed—Savoy Hotel theatrical party last September. Now I guess we are well on the way to being old friends."

She laughed gaily, and became very soon entirely at her ease. She wore a black gown of guileful simplicity, her brilliant hair was becomingly arranged, her eyes were bright and her smile pleasant. Nevertheless, there were odd moments when, notwithstanding her obvious content with her surroundings and with her companion, her face clouded over and her eyes wandered away into space.

"Something on your mind?" Mr. Cray inquired presently.

She nodded.

"It is that boy's face," she confessed. "I can see him now, coming out of the cottage

and crossing the road towards us. He was like a madman—the way he jumped the wall and ran down the hillside, muttering to himself. Yet it wasn't a bad face. Tell me what happened."

"Well, I did what I could," Mr. Cray said, thoughtfully. "I went along in the car as far as the nearest village, and brought back the doctor and a gendarme."

"Do they think that it was the boy who did it?" she asked.

"Things kind of point that way," Mr. Cray admitted. "The household consisted of Jacques Cassiat, the murdered man, his second wife, and Jacques, the son by his first wife—the boy we saw. From what someone told my chauffeur it was a miserable *ménage*. The old man was mean but doting. He wouldn't even pay his son wages for the work he did on the bit of farm, and the woman seems to have helped to make bad blood between them whenever she could."

"And who was the other man?"

"François Lafont, his name was," Mr. Cray replied. "He owns the next plot of land."

The girl shivered a little.

"These things are commonplace enough to read about," she remarked, "but it gives one a strange feeling to have been within half a yard of anyone who has just committed a murder. Did you see how blue that boy's eyes were, and what a finely-shaped forehead he had?"

Mr. Cray sipped his wine thoughtfully.

"I kind of cottoned to that young man myself," he admitted. "So much so that I'm taking a bit of trouble to get at the rights of the matter."

She looked puzzled.

"Yes?" she murmured.

"I'm one of those harmless old blunderers," Mr. Cray explained, "who go about the world poking their noses into other people's business. I've a kind of natural taste for adventures and for straightening out problems when I come across them. I get more kicks than thanks, but I've had some amusement out of it. With regard to this present little affair, there don't seem, on the face of it, much room for interference from anybody. The boy will be arrested probably to-night, and maybe he'll confess right away. If so, of course, there's an end of it. If he don't—if he really has any sort of a story to tell—well, I shall pay a lawyer to get at the rights of it. I have been to the police-station myself already. Say, how would you like to spend the rest of the evening, Miss Daisy? There's the Opera right over the way, or we could go across to the Rooms?"

"The Opera would be heavenly," the young lady declared. "I adore music."

"I took seats on the chance," her host announced. "We'll just have a cup of coffee in the lounge and get along over."

The remainder of the evening passed in the most pleasant fashion. Mr. Cray and his companion thoroughly enjoyed the music, thoroughly enjoyed each other's company, and strolled back towards the Hôtel de Paris about half-past eleven, on excellent terms with one another.

"Just a mouthful of supper across at the Café," Mr. Cray insisted, "and a glass of wine, and I'll take you right back."

"It sounds delightful," she murmured.

THEY called first at the hotel, at Mr. Cray's suggestion, and in the lounge they were accosted by a tall, dark man dressed in sombre black, with a small black tie, a very high, white linen collar, and carrying a black cape upon his arm. Mr. Cray introduced him to his companion.

"Monsieur Droumbet, the *avocat*," he explained. "I went in to see him this afternoon, and asked him to let me know of any developments in that little affair we saw something of this morning."

"The young man Jacques Cassiat was arrested at seven o'clock this evening," the *avocat* announced. "He was seated on a bench on the promenade."

"Did he confess?" Mr. Cray asked, eagerly.

"On the contrary," the *avocat* replied, "he had every appearance of being shocked, both at the news of the old man's murder and at the fact that he was suspected of it. He declared that he had meant to return home himself later. He admitted the quarrel, but declared that his father was strong and well when he left him."

Mr. Cray smiled.

"This news," he said, "confirms my own impression of the case. I am very much obliged, Monsieur Droumbet. At what hour will the magistrate's examination take place to-morrow morning?"

"At eleven o'clock, monsieur."

"At a quarter to eleven I shall be at your office," Mr. Cray announced.

"I shall await your pleasure, monsieur," was the polite reply.

M. Droumbet bowed first to Miss Daisy Lindel, then to Mr. Cray, and afterwards to no one in particular.

"What's your hurry?" Mr. Cray remonstrated. "We thought of stepping across to the Café de Paris for a sandwich and a bottle of wine. Won't you join us?"

M. Droumbet shook his head. He was apologetic but emphatic.

"Monsieur Cray will excuse me," he begged. "For the visitor those places are very well. For me who practises my profession here, it would be ruin to be seen at

"In the lounge they were accosted by a man dressed in sombre black. Mr. Cray introduced him to his companion. 'Monsieur Droumbet, the *avocat*,' he explained."

them. I shall expect Monsieur Cray at a quarter to eleven to-morrow morning."

He departed with a farewell flourish of the hat. Mr. Cray looked after him with some concern.

"Say, I don't see where his fun comes in," he remarked. "Maybe he keeps canaries, or plays on the piano. Let's be getting across now."

"Are you going to pay him to defend the boy?" she asked, as they stepped back into the scented night, and turned their faces towards the hotel, from which the sound of music travelled to their ears.

"I guess so—something of the sort," Mr. Cray assented.

"You dear, generous man!" she murmured, squeezing his arm.

AT the Café de Paris it appeared that Mr. Cray was also a well-known client. A table in the best part of the room was at once prepared for him, his brief orders met with instantaneous response, and the Bacchanalian high priest who tendered him the wine list received his commands with marks of the deepest respect. To complete his companion's happiness, Mr. Cray proved himself an expert in the modern dances which were being lavishly indulged in, and as he led her, breathless, back to her place, she declared that she was having the most enjoyable evening of her life.

"Why, if all the crowd aren't here!" she exclaimed a little later, waving her hand towards a distant corner of the room. "There's Mr. Harding, the producer, and Miss May, our leading lady, and Mr. Spens, the photographer, whom you met this morning. They don't seem to be able to find a table."

"Ask them right across," Mr. Cray insisted, hospitably. "We'll find room for them here."

The girl beckoned her friends without enthusiasm.

"You won't be able to escort me home now," she whispered.

"Damn!" Mr. Cray muttered, with mendacious emphasis.

A dozen waiters flew to do their wealthy patron's bidding. The table was promptly rearranged and extended. Pleasant courtesies were exchanged with the newcomers, and the evening proceeded merrily, with Mr. Cray a self-established host. It was three o'clock before the party broke up. Mr. Cray and Spens were the last to leave the room.

"I'm afraid I'm giving you a lot of trouble," Mr. Cray said politely.

The camera man removed a large cigar from the corner of his mouth. Whatever cares he might have had in private life, the memory of them had escaped him. The champagne had been potent and plentiful, and his state was beatific.

"No trouble at all, old boy," he declared. "Pleasure do anything for you. What a night! What a place! What a life!"

The little omnibus rolled off amidst a chorus of thanks from its occupants, and a little bouquet of kisses from the ladies to which Mr. Cray gallantly responded. He watched the vehicle turn the corner of the square. Then he went home to bed.

EVEN the examining magistrate himself, a grey and ponderous gentleman, seemed conscious of the sense of drama which pervaded the musty room with its high windows and bare, polished floors, in which next morning he conducted his preliminary investigation into the circumstances attendant upon the murder of Jacques Cassiat. Before him stood the wretched youth, Jacques Cassiat, junior, a gendarme on either side; on his left hand, his clerk; on his right hand, installed in a seat of honour, sat Mr. Cray, who, in addition to his passport, made a point of always carrying with him credentials of the highest order. Furthermore, seated some distance away was the widow of the murdered man, with the neighbour, François Lafont. The two whispered to one another frequently. Once, when the boy had burst into a tirade against her unkindness to his father, she had passed her arm as though for protection through her companion's. Neither seemed entirely at ease. Their presence in court during the boy's examination was unusual and unexplained. Neither of them found it pleasant.

The magistrate broke a somewhat prolonged silence, glancing up from the notes which he had made during his examination of the boy. He turned to the latter, pursing out his lips, settling his horn-rimmed spectacles a little more firmly upon his nose, and tapping upon the desk with his penholder.

"Jacques Cassiat," he said, "you are in custody, probably to be charged with the murder of your father, Jacques Cassiat, senior, of the Orchard Farm. You obstinately deny your guilt. Yet it has been proved that you left the house after a violent quarrel with your father, that those quarrels were of almost daily occurrence, and that he was found stabbed in his chair by the first person who entered the room after your departure. In the face of these facts, do you still obstinately deny your guilt?"

"I am not guilty," the boy declared passionately. "I swear that I never raised my hand against him! Before the good God——"

M. Droumbet, the *avocat*, had risen to his feet. He brandished his arm before the boy's face.

"Remember!" he cried, and the boy broke off in his passionate outburst.

M. Droumbet turned to the magistrate.

"*Monsieur le magistrat*," he began, and his voice was charged with portentous meaning, "I beg to be allowed to submit evidence on behalf of the accused."

The magistrate nodded. In the background, François Lafont and the woman by his side unlocked hands and sat a little apart. They both leaned forward to listen. The woman's black eyebrows nearly met. The man's lips had parted, showing unpleasant yellow teeth.

"I beg to ask your honour to examine this photograph," the *avocat* continued, passing one up to the magistrate.

The magistrate studied the picture which had been submitted for his inspection.

"That is a photograph of Orchard Farm," M. Droumbet went on, "taken by a photographer employed by an English cinema firm, who waits without for your examination. I ask you, sir, to look at the window on the left. What do you see?"

"I see," the magistrate replied, "the blurred but distinguishable form of a man—an old man—looking out of the window."

"That man, sir," the *avocat* declared, "was Jacques Cassiat! And listen," he added, throwing out his arms with a theatrical gesture, "that picture was taken after the wrongfully accused boy there had left the house! The figure at the window is the figure of his father, who went to the window to watch the departure of his son."

"Have you witnesses?" the magistrate inquired.

"The photographer himself," was the triumphant reply, "Monsieur Cray, the American gentleman of great importance who sits by your side, and a young lady from the cinema company. All three will testify that the photographer took up his position and secured his picture after that unfortunate young man had crossed the road and descended the hill."

The magistrate turned towards Mr. Cray, who bowed his head.

"I am prepared to bear witness to that upon my oath," he said.

The magistrate turned back to M. Droumbet.

"This is very extraordinary evidence, *monsieur l'avocat*," he said. "We are here to sift the matter. If the boy did not kill his father, then who did?"

"Monsieur," was the prompt reply, "before I go farther, I have to request you to remove the gendarmes from guarding that young man, and to place them at the door. I myself will be responsible for Jacques Cassiat."

The magistrate made a sign and the thing was done. M. Droumbet continued.

"*Monsieur le magistrat*," he pronounced, "perjury has been committed in this court within the last hour. You have been told a lie! You have been told a lie to shield the guilty man!"

THERE was an intense silence. François Lafont was leaning farther forward in his seat now, breathing heavily. The courage born of the wine shops where he had spent the early morning was evaporating. The woman's eyes were like points of fire.

"The man Lafont there," the *avocat* continued, with a sudden sweep of the arm, "was in the outhouse, where the woman by his side was washing clothes, whilst the quarrel between father and son was at its height. I can prove that he was there. Let us assume that he entered the house, that he seized the opportunity of that quarrel and that poor boy's precipitate departure to commit the evil deed which secured for him the old man Cassiat's savings, and to make his mistress of to-day his wife of to-morrow."

"A lie!" the woman shrieked. "Monsieur," she added imploringly to the magistrate, "stop that man!"

Lafont, by her side, was shaking like a man in an ague.

"I can prove," the *avocat* continued, "that that man Lafont left the house after the poor boy Cassiat, that he left it secretly, keeping all the time under cover of the grey stone wall whilst he made his way to his own home. Arrived there, he fetched out his bicycle and came along the road on a casual errand. It was no casual errand, *monsieur le magistrat*. He came back to see the work which he had done! My facts are facts. The American gentleman of importance who sits by your side can testify to their truth. It was he who saw the man, whom I now accuse as the murderer of Jacques Cassiat, skulking from the house where he had committed that foul deed!"

Lafont was on his feet. The woman was shouting and shrieking at him.

"She made me do it!" he cried. "It was she who placed the knife in my hand! She threw her arms around his neck! She would have strangled him if I had not struck!"

"Liar! Coward! Poltroon!" the woman shrieked, as she fell upon her companion and forced her hands against his mouth. "You give yourself to the guillotine! You have a heart of putty!"

The gendarmes separated them. The magistrate made a sign, and their hands fell heavily upon Lafont's shoulder.

"You confess, Lafont?" the magistrate cried, with outstretched finger. "It is useless to deny your guilt."

"I killed the old man," Lafont faltered, each word seeming to stick in his throat. "We talked of it often, she and I. She put it into my head as she put the knife into my hand."

The woman spat at him. Lafont was marched away. The boy, a little dazed, crept over to where Mr. Cray was seated, and kissed his hand.

"It was monsieur who discovered the truth," he murmured.

"My young friend," Mr. Cray replied, "truth always discovers itself."

The magistrate took up a knife and began to pare his nails.

"A most interesting morning," he said. "Monsieur will do me the honour of taking *déjeuner* with me?"

"Any morning except this morning, with pleasure," Mr. Cray replied. "It chances that I have an engagement."

"To-morrow, then," the magistrate agreed, rising to his feet. "Au revoir, monsieur! In the name of the Law, I thank you."

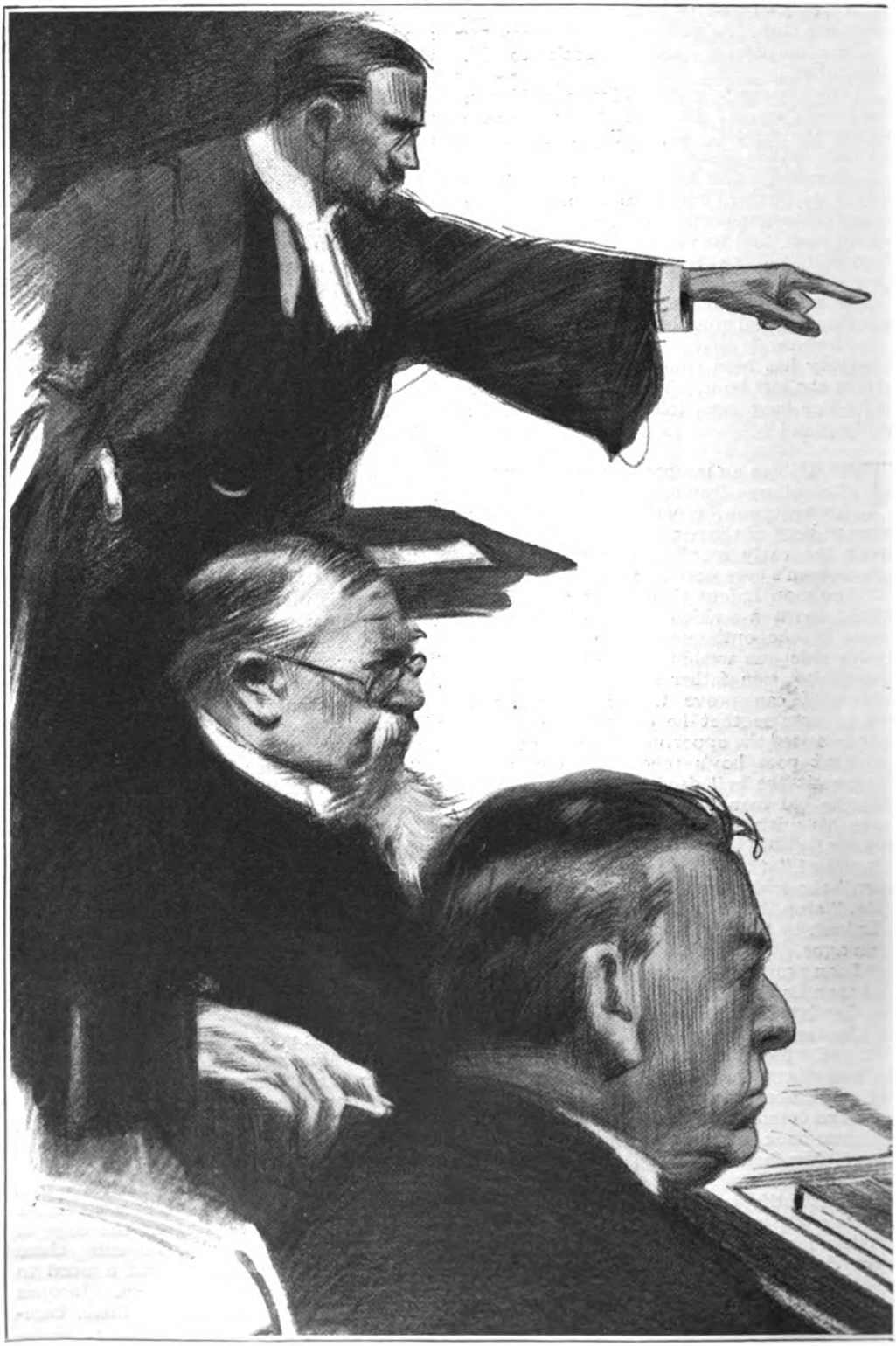
Mr. Cray drew a little breath as he left the fusty court and stepped into the brilliant sunshine. Everywhere were signs of a busy and genial life. Women flitted about like butterflies in their pursuit of pleasure. The little tables outside the Café de Paris were almost all taken. Miss Daisy Lindel waved her parasol.

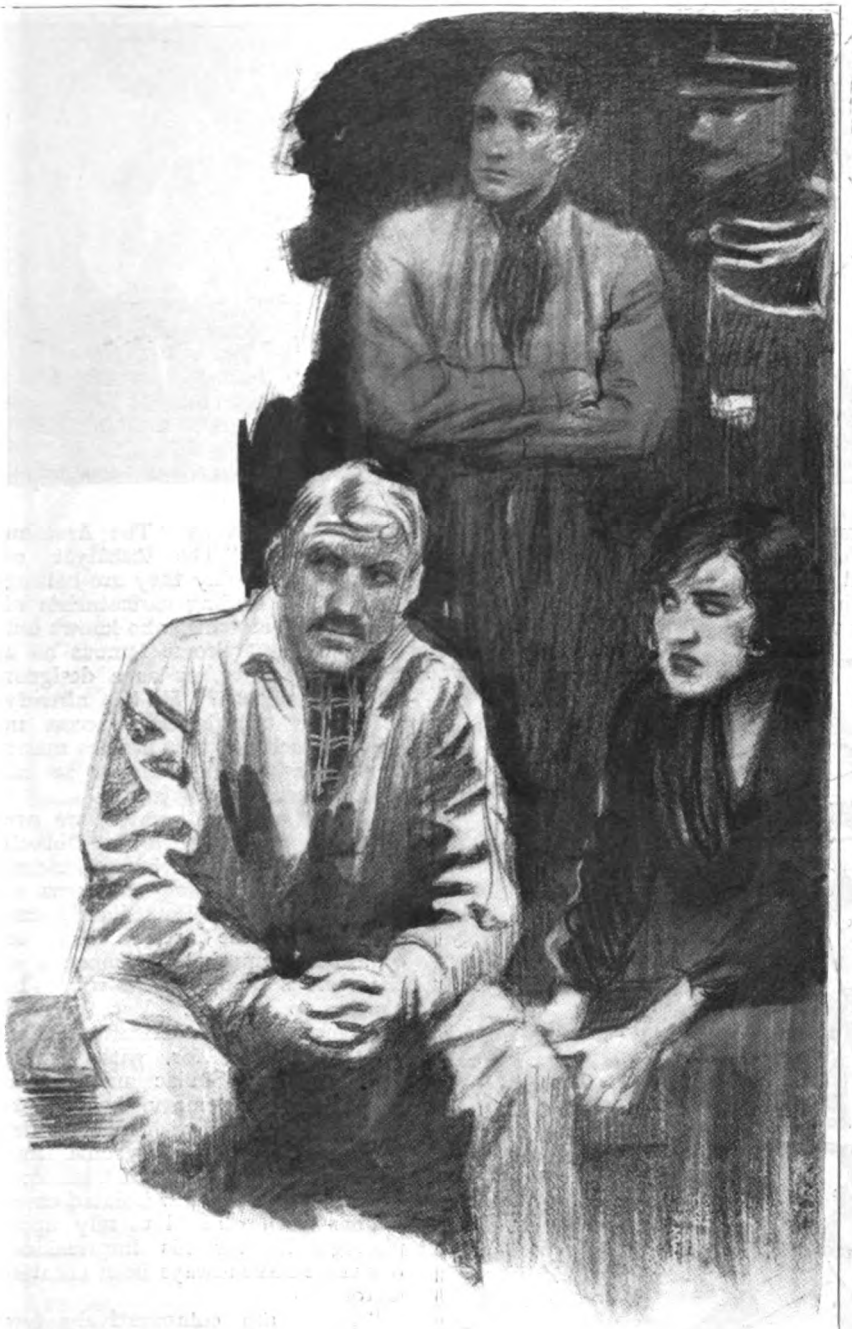
"Is everything all right?" she asked, anxiously.

The sun was very warm and the west wind fragrant. Mr. Cray shook himself free from that web of ugly memories.

"The boy is free," he assured her.

She gave a little sigh of relief, and Mr. Cray seated himself in the chair which she had been guarding. There was an almost feverish zest in the order which he gave to a passing waiter. Then he became conscious that the boy was lingering at the edge of the little array of tables, lingering there wistfully, as though he still had a word to say. Mr. Cray beckoned to him. Jacques Cassiat hastened up and stood there, bareheaded.





"'The man Lafont there,' he continued, with a sudden sweep of the arm, 'was in the outhouse whilst the quarrel between father and son was at its height. I can prove that he was there.'"

"If monsieur would accept my service," he begged, nervously fingering his cap.

Mr. Cray shook his head, smiling.

"Take my advice, Jacques," he said. "Get back to your farm and remember these last twenty-four hours only as a dream."

"It shall be as monsieur says," the boy replied reluctantly; "but monsieur will remember," he added, his hand pressed for a moment against his heart, "there will be a pain here until the day when monsieur shall require some service of me."

He moved away almost at once and turned up the hill, a strange figure in his peasant's clothes and with his fine, free carriage. They watched him until he was out of sight.

"I should like to see him in a film," Miss Daisy Lindel declared.

Mr. Cray only smiled.

Another Adventure of Mr. Cray next mon'h.

Dulac as Caricaturist

UNTIL comparatively recently, the world of art associated the name of Edmund Dulac principally with the very beautiful water-colour drawings which he made in illustration to such classics as "The Arabian Nights" and "The Rubáiyât of Omar Khayyâm." To-day they are hailing him as one of the leading caricaturists of modern times. To-morrow, who knows but that he may become famous as a portrait painter, or as a designer of scenic effects? He has already met with considerable success in these branches of art, besides many others, and there seems to be no limit to his versatility.

A CHANCE LOST TO VELAZQUEZ.
(King Alfonso XIII.)
"Is there a more modern king than I?"

In this article, however, we are concerned mainly with Mr. Dulac's activities as caricaturist. Glancing at the accompanying specimens of his work, we are immediately impressed by the artist's skill in obtaining remarkable likenesses of the various public figures whom he chooses to portray. But there is even more in these caricatures than meets the eye, for, with a few exceptions, Mr. Dulac made them entirely from memory, being personally acquainted with his subjects, or having seen them at some time or other in the House of Commons or at a club. In a few isolated cases he has been obliged to rely upon photographs for his impressions, but these have always been unsatisfactory.

"There are comparatively few notabilities whom I have not had an opportunity to study at some time or other," he said, "and once I have taken a mental photograph of a man's features I generally manage to remember them indefinitely. Fortunately, I do not require to make any preliminary sketches from life

THE LEGEND OF ST. JEROME.
(Mr. George Bernard Shaw and the British Lion.)
"A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience."—*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

when preparing my caricatures. All that I need is to be allowed to watch my 'victim' for five or ten minutes in order to study his movements and mannerisms, and if possible to *hear him speak*. That may seem strange to you, but it is of paramount importance for me to hear a man's voice in order to get a true impression of his personality. It is quite easy to gather an entirely wrong impression of a person from a photograph, or even from seeing him in the flesh. But as soon as he speaks he reveals his true self. How often do we hear some such remark as: 'He looks a perfect gentleman; but when he opens his mouth——!'

"After all, it is the personality of the subject that really counts, for the mere distortion of facial peculiarities does not constitute a true caricature."

Mr. Dulac's work certainly supports this contention, for some of his drawings are almost portraits, whilst those in which he has resorted to slight exaggerations are treated with such delicacy and restraint that they convey no suggestion of malice. Behind them all one senses a spirit of good-humoured banter that is part of the personality of the artist himself.

His method of working is rather unusual in that, although his preliminary sketches are made in pencil, he never uses an eraser. Instead, he prefers to cover his rough sketch with tracing paper and to redraw the entire subject, carefully altering a line here and there as he proceeds, and sometimes, when dissatisfied, making quite half-a-dozen tracings before the desired effect is obtained.

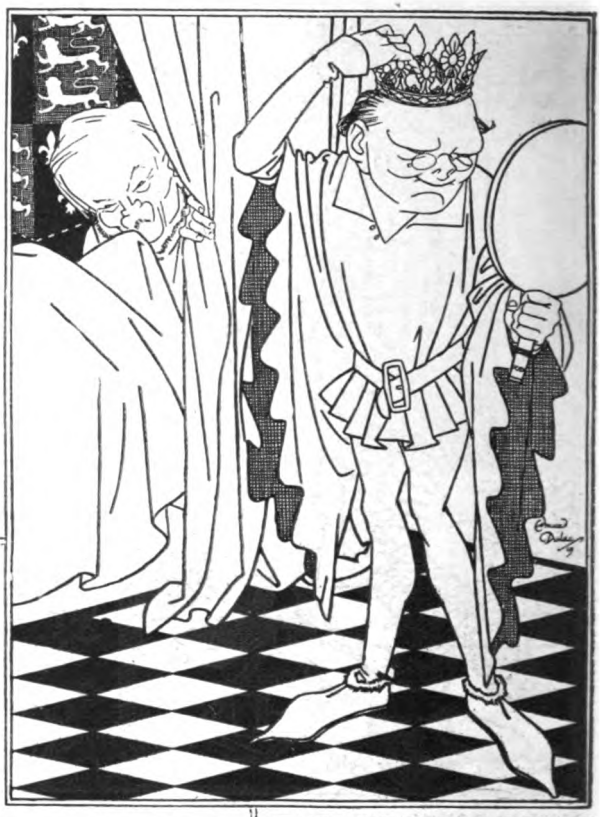
Many of Mr. Dulac's victims have been highly amused upon seeing the artist's humorous impressions

"ECCE HOMUNCULUS!"
(Suggestion for a new Masterpiece by Mr. Epstein.)
The Importance of Being Unconventional.

of themselves—which were originally published in the *Outlook*, and subsequently exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, Leicester Square.

The drawing of the King of Spain is a satire upon the old-world pomp and ceremony which still exists in the Spanish Court, and to which the very modern monarch manages to adapt himself so admirably when occasion demands. Incidentally the features of King Alfonso, particularly the chin, are not unlike those of the Philip of Velazquez upon which this caricature is a skit.

The caricature of G. Bernard Shaw is interesting as another example of the artist's skill in burlesquing various styles of art, for the composition of the picture is an imitation of an old fifteenth-century wood engraving.



"THE HEIR PRESUMPTIVE."
(The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P.)
Trying it on.

A "GREAT ADVENTURE"—
but not quite the greatest.
(Mr. Arnold Bennett in His Famous Pottery Act.)

The satire upon the work of Mr. Epstein was made in allusion to the much-discussed statue of Christ, which the sculptor exhibited not long ago, and is a pictorial comment upon the latter's daringly unconventional methods. (It will be remembered that his statue of Christ was practically clean shaven, and in direct opposition to all orthodox ideas.) Mr. Dulac has depicted Mr. Epstein making a statue of Napoleon with an enormous moustache!

The study of Mr. Arnold Bennett in his "Great Pottery Act" is full of quiet humour. In connection with this, Mr. Dulac made some interesting comments.

"Nearly all people of outstanding personality develop certain traits which lift them

PERFECT PEACE.
(Mr. Balfour.)
A Reminiscence of San Remo.

from the common rut. Sometimes their eccentricities are only slight, but one feels that they would grow rapidly unless they were kept well in hand. That is what I endeavour to convey in my caricatures. Of course, Mr. Bennett's hair is not quite so untidy and his collar is not so large as I have drawn it, neither does he stand quite so awkwardly as I have depicted him. Yet, from an actual impression of his own personality, I feel that Mr. Bennett's tendencies point in the direction I have indicated, and that if he were not to keep a check upon himself he would in all probability develop into such a character as I have depicted."

The brilliant study of Miss Irene Vanbrugh is particularly worthy of mention, not only for the originality of the idea, but for the remarkably characteristic facial expressions. Yet the caricature was made entirely from memory.

So distinct and permanent are the mental impressions which Mr. Dulac stores in his brain that he is able to make remarkably true water-colour portraits—as distinct from caricatures—of friends who are well known to him, without ever requesting them to sit for him. Naturally, this gift is a great asset to him in all portraiture that he undertakes, and the success of his caricatures has given quite a fillip to the demand for his services as a portrait painter.

Born in Toulouse, of French parents, Mr. Dulac is British by naturalization, and speaks English with only the slightest trace of accent. It was originally intended that he should enter the legal profession, of which his father was a member, and he actually spent two years in the study of law, but the artistic strain inherited from his forefathers asserted itself, and he was eventually allowed to follow his

THE MOODY DEAN.
(The Very Rev. W. R. Inge.)
"Alas, poor (Pre-hist)Yorick!"

Dulac as Caricaturist

natural bent, commencing his studies in art at the famous Julian's *ateliers* in Paris.

All his life he has dabbled in caricature as a pastime, and among his most treasured possessions are a number of humorous studies of the various tutors which he made during the hours when he was supposed to be studying law. Nevertheless, none of his work in this direction was published until 1915.

He is still in his thirties, and will go a long way yet—though in what new branch of artistic endeavour he will shine next it is hard to say. His caricatures are remarkable, but then so are his water-colour drawings, his original designs for furniture, his colour schemes for stage effects and costumes, the quaint little wooden figures of various public personalities—including the King and Queen—which he has carved with an ordinary penknife for his own amusement, and the beautiful musical instruments which are also of his own design and making, and upon which he plays with evident talent.

COMEDY AND TRAGEDY.
(Miss Irene Vanbrugh.)
Mistress of Both.

To describe him merely as a caricaturist would be to disregard all the other branches of his profession in which he excels. It would be like describing the Prime Minister as an orator. Edmund Dulac is a true artist, to whom nothing in art seems impossible.

AN EXERCISE IN ANAGRAMS.

IN the following letter each word, or group of words, in heavier type may be transformed into a single English word, thus making perfect sense when the whole letter is read. When two or more capitals occur in the same anagram a proper name or place-name is indicated.

10, The **Neap Dales,**
Sole of Kent.

Dear **Sir Hot Perch,**

You will be glad to hear that I am now well enough to **eat a plumber** almost daily in **open taxi toil** of my **vexed a cat** garden. I shall have some fine **sage in rum** doing well in my **cart very soon,** while **her polo tie** and **roast in can** in the **swept floor** are thriving and **mouse-run.** There is also good promise of **sad hail** later on.

Towards the **mail gong** of a recent **fat on Nero** I was scanning the ground for a lost **job, etc.,** with efforts which were fairly **real rug** and **spent tries.** Happening to look up, I saw a **travel** of **turned out** mind behind the **ape trap** adjoining a heap of **sop to eat** which stands there. From these, or from the **split me men** of the **danger,** he picked up a missile, and without **wan grin** hit the **cosmic hat** part of my **coral rope** frame, using (so to speak) a kind of **tamer gun** not easily **buttered.** I was **dad on suet** for the moment; then I rebuked him with no little **easy trip,** but he bolted without any **gay polo.** For myself I was glad to be spared anything in the way of a **turf race.**

A week ago I was in a **tardy hug** place in the **deal chart.** As a **sutler** I have been much out of sorts and **died in sops** since. To add to my discomfort I have run out of the right sort of **never prod** for the **votes** in my **dusty,** and have been compelled to use **chain treat** of an **iron fire** kind.

I am by nature an absolute **moist pit** and my **tame pert men** nearly always **buy a ton,** but after **I set a vile tune** like these my mind has been in an extremely **sad share** condition.

I have a **comic union mat** for you of considerable **price on mat.** The gossips have lately been saying that Bob **Live Carp** and my niece, Susan **Anna Chub,** have been given to **flit on stair** too often and **yet stout as lion.** As a matter of fact their **late broth** is at least a month old. I wonder what the old **age word** lady living in **Real Melba** street has to say. Neither of them can ignore an old **tear veil** without being **a sly idol.** I have already been **uncle's dot** about the **our Sue sat.** My **mule in sac** opinion, **hot roofs!**

I am sending you a **gap cake** of **hip cans** and **hot cake, sir,** both of which I hope you will find **capable, etc.**

With an assurance of my **red pin fish** and **of nice fat,**

I am always,

Your affectionate **fat red hog,**
Grin Dale Gun Moat.

(Solution next month.)

The Missing Clue

by

LLOYD WILLIAMS

ILLUSTRATED BY TREYER EVANS

WHEN Vivian Duncan, leaving Lambeth behind him, came to Westminster Bridge he kept to the Parliament House side, which is always by far the less frequented. It was a dark night and drizzling rain fell, but, wrapped in an immaculate raincoat, he was dry and comfortable.

Once or twice he paused and looked back, peering into the darkness to make sure that no other wayfarer was at hand; at about the centre of the bridge he took a revolver out of his pocket and felt it carefully with his fingers; he understood the handling of it so well that there was no need to stand even for a moment under a lamp. There were six chambers; they were all filled, five live cartridges and one exploded. With a smile of amusement, he leaned over the parapet and dropped it.

"So much for that," he whispered.

He stood for a moment listening for the splash, but could hear nothing; then he walked on.

"Nine times out of ten the weapon gives the game away," he was thinking. "A good-class revolver is fairly easy to trace, but they will not find mine."

Leaving the bridge, he crossed Parliament Square and made for one of the huge blocks of flats in Victoria Street; outside he hesitated, to collect his thoughts. It is always the details that count; the chance word spoken to someone unexpectedly; he must be ready with his tale and careful not to flinch from it. But the luck was with him. It was an hour of the evening when certain parts of London are deserted; far too late for shopping or business, and too early for the theatres to disgorge their mobs.

In the entrance to the block of flats where he lived he met no one; the staircase was on his right, the lift just beyond it and concealed from view by a bend in the corridor. The lift attendant was doubtless half asleep, but Duncan did not need his services; he ran lightly up the stairway to the third floor—still meeting no one—and let himself into his own flat.

He locked himself in. He was alone. It was a service flat, and though the service was costly he found it more convenient than keeping a staff of servants.

The little things count. He took stock of his appearance with care, examining his coat minutely. It bore no marks—none of those extremely tell-tale marks that have sometimes hanged a man—but it was damp. That was easily rectified by hanging it for a few minutes over a radiator; he cleaned and

polished his boots carefully, put them away in the boot cupboard, and donned house shoes; finally he lighted a cigarette, tossed off a stiff whisky-and-soda, and seated himself at his writing-table to conclude a long letter to South America.

Even this was a part of his plan. It was addressed to the firm's junior partner, who was in Rio, and began :—

MY DEAR KANE,—I have dined abstemiously at the Piccadilly, and it is now nine o'clock. I propose to devote the entire evening to a discussion of outstanding points.

The rest of it was a calm assembling of business details. But the letter had actually been written hours ago, for at nine o'clock he was in the firm's Lambeth factory, and the automatic, which he had tossed over Westminster Bridge, was doing its work. His story would be that he spent the evening in writing this letter to Rio, and its contents would support him. To be sure, it was not a proof of alibi, but nine people out of ten would regard it as convincing.

He took pride in the fact that his handwriting showed no sign of excitement, and he allowed the ink to dry as it had dried in the first part of the letter, so that there might be no sign of a break-off.

Presently the telephone-bell rang, and he put out his hand instinctively to take down the receiver.

But he paused, and looked at the thing with his lips pursed up thoughtfully. One must be careful. He had overlooked the telephone. Suppose someone—Myra, for instance—had rung him up while he was out! How was he to explain not having heard the ring? Had he fallen asleep? No, that would not meet the case, because he had been busy writing this letter. The telephone was out of order. Yes, that must be the answer, and if it was out of order earlier in the evening, it was out of order now. Therefore, the inquirer must be allowed to ring as long as he, or she, pleased, but no answer would be vouchsafed. He continued his writing without a trace of embarrassment until, at last, the telephone became silent.

An hour passed, and he pushed his work aside and thought back over the affairs of the night to make sure there was no slip.

He had saved himself from ruin in the only possible way, and he was troubled with no regrets. If only Sir John Leftwych, his senior partner, had not been such a fool as to find him out, he would have been alive now.

"He isn't the first man who has been a little too clever," said Duncan to himself, coldly. "He should have left well alone. Was it likely I would see myself kicked out of the firm in disgrace, and lose Myra and her money, for nothing? Self-defence is a law of nature."

His measures of self-defence were taken swiftly. Only that morning the shrewd old man had discovered his partner's defalcation, and Duncan knew that on the morrow sentence would be passed. It might not mean a prosecution, for the old man would dislike washing the firm's dirty linen in public, but for practical purposes he would be a ruined man.

The time to strike was now.

SIR JOHN LEFTWYCH would remain in his office half the night, poring over books and papers to discover the extent of the damage, and it was simple for Duncan to return. His programme was arranged with care. He dined at the Piccadilly and mentioned to an acquaintance that he had a "long evening's work to do in his rooms."

He actually went to his rooms, taking a taxi to the block of flats and ascending to the third floor by the lift. He gave the lift-man a cigar in order to impress it on his memory. But he left the place immediately afterwards by the staircase and walked over the bridge to the factory; there his task was short and deadly. He entered with his private key—reflecting grimly that he would have no private key to-morrow unless he acted promptly—and, walking softly along the corridor past the general clerks' offices, came to the old man's room. The door stood ajar, and he could see him sitting at his desk engrossed in calculations.

The pistol he used was almost noiseless, and the bullet entered behind his victim's ear. There was neither mercy nor hesitation; Sir John scarcely moved, and certainly did not groan.

Duncan glanced at him casually, and felt his heart. So far his "job" was complete; all that remained was to give the place the appearance of a common burglary. He secured two or three documents that incriminated himself, and took a good deal of trouble to reduce the office to confusion, working quietly but effectively; neither did he forget to secure all the ready money that lay about; this gave colour to the notion of burglary and was extremely convenient for his own purposes.

All that remained was to get away without being seen; and that was contrived with little difficulty. There was a point of vantage from which he could watch for the constable on his beat without fear of detection. He saw him go past and disappear; then he let himself out of the place and, after disposing of his weapon, returned to his flat.

Going over the events point by point in his mind, he felt well satisfied; there was

"'It's hatefully late to call, Vivian,' she said, entering in a matter-of-fact way. 'But I felt I must have a talk with you.'"

nothing to associate him with the murder; no one had seen him enter the place or leave it and he had been cunning enough to do a thing which not one criminal in a hundred would think of. The question would arise: How did the intruder make his way into the place?

Duncan had left that point open, taking no trouble to provide a false means of ingress. The police would think that the intruder was already concealed in the building before the staff left, and they would be so well pleased with the theory that it would blind them to other possibilities. The plan was subtle, and he could afford to smile. "Well, well, one must go to bed some time or other," he told himself. "To-morrow I must be decently shocked at the awful tragedy, and comfort my dear Myra on the loss of her estimable but too exacting father. That will at least be a charming office."

HE had already risen, when the outer bell of his flat rang. A visitor might be tiresome. But no! On the whole, it was fortunate. He would admit the visitor and make a handsome display of his evening's work, doing it with a natural air of sleepiness.

He went to the door, and gave a start of real surprise. Myra stood there in dance frock covered with a cloak.

"It's hatefully late to call, Vivian," she said, entering in a matter-of-fact way. "But I felt I must have a talk with you. I've rung you up two or three times during the evening, but couldn't get an answer."

He followed her into the dining-room, and she threw back her wrap and sat down.

"The 'phone must be out of order," he said. "I have been at home all the evening, but haven't heard a sound. Been writing a long yarn to old Kane. Would you care to read some of it? I'm afraid it's mostly business."

He insisted on fetching the paper, because he wanted to place her in such a position that if, by any miracle, a question arose as to his movements, she would be forced to say she had seen the letter.

She glanced at the first line or two with eyes that showed little interest, and then pushed it aside.

"You are a hard worker, old man," she said. "Father's right in that. No one could be keener on business."

"Will you have a drink of any kind? I've got some decent port here."

"No, thanks; the Trenthams did us awfully well," she said. "I want to speak to you seriously, Vivian. It's about our engagement."

He glanced at her thoughtfully and possibly guessed what was coming. She was an extraordinarily pretty creature, but, with the hard coolness of his kind, Vivian considered her too "young." She was barely nineteen and as innocent and fresh as a schoolgirl. He liked his women-folk to have "more spice." Yet, in his own way, he was in love with his future wife. Her beauty coupled with her fortune made her entirely irresistible, and it would have been hard to say whether his devotion rested more on her attraction or on her wealth.

But he knew how to "play the game" with women, as he knew so many arts.

"And what about our engagement, my dear?"

"I think it ought to be broken off," she said.

"Broken off?" He pretended to be shocked and surprised, though he was aware that not all his art could bridge the growing gap between them. "What has put that idea in your head, Myra mine?"

"I don't think I'm—well, I don't think I'm as fond of you as I ought to be," she said, colouring a little. "I'm not sentimental, Vivian," she went on, with a girlish attempt to be worldly. "But it's wicked for people to marry unless they really lo—that is, care for one another."

"Of course, but——"

He felt this needed handling with care; to lose Myra when he had secured so much would be to lose half his victory; besides, with Sir John dead and Myra sole heiress to all he possessed, the thing was absurd.

"You surely don't doubt, dearest, that I love you with all my heart?" he said, and his tone was so well modulated that she looked at him with quick sympathetic tears.

"Are you sure, Vivian?" she asked. "Do you really care as much as all that?"

"How can you ask?" He knelt by her side, half playfully, half adoringly, and felt that he was performing his *rôle* with real success; for all her intelligence, the girl was hardly old enough, hardly experienced enough, to detect the false ring. "You know, Myra, I'm not a demonstrative chap," he went on. "I don't shout about my feelings all day, but, my dear——"

He drew closer, but she shrank away, and he was too acute to vex her; the affair needed the nicest handling, and he fell back on the playful, manly mood that suited him so well.

"I'm not a romantic lover, Myra," he said. "But it's all real, my dear."

"I'm glad you're not too romantic, Vivian. I should hate it," she said, with a delicious smile. "When people really mean things, I'm sure they never rave. But suppose—I didn't care for you quite as a girl ought to care for the man she is going to

marry. Vivian, I want you to be generous and release me."

"As you please."

He had won. He knew it, the instant the words passed his lips; he had taken the right line with her. To plead or even argue with her, to oppose her wishes, would only strengthen them; and if she insisted on breaking their engagement, there was nothing to stop her. But in playing the generous, big-hearted man he was striking the right note, and he saw the flutter of compunction in her honest eyes at once.

"I want you to be happy. That's all. And if—— Well, my dear, you want to be free, and you are free."

She bit her lip to keep back the tears of perplexity. "I know I'm behaving hatefully," she said. "And Dad will be vexed, because he thinks the world of you. But I can't help it, Vivian—I don't love you. I can't make myself love you."

"Have I demanded too much love?" he asked, with a fine, patient smile. "Haven't I always said I am content to wait for the love to come? But you are not quite frank with me, Myra. Your fancy has strayed elsewhere."

She blushed and hung her head. How beautifully he was putting her in the wrong!

"Young Draycott has come between us," he said.

"He has never said a single word, or done anything, that isn't right and fair," she said, quietly.

For an instant his eyes narrowed unpleasantly, but he quickly recovered his smiling good-humour. "Of course not. Draycott is a better man than I am, Myra, and if he will make you happier, I shall not stand in your way."

"Oh, Vivian!"

"At the same time, even a criminal is allowed to plead his own case," he went on rapidly. "Draycott is a comparative stranger! I claim to be an old friend. And our engagement means a great deal to me. I don't want to come the 'pi' game, but I have been a better man these last six months, dear, and I—well, I dread losing you."

He knew how to play on her feelings; nothing appeals so strongly to a girl as the thought of being necessary to someone.

"I should hate to be unkind, Vivian," she said, in a troubled voice.

"Give me a little time, dear," he pleaded, earnestly. "Let us go on as we are for another six months. If at the end of that time you still feel it is a mistake, I shall know I have had my chance, and mustn't grumble. You will be free. But you won't have snatched away the thing I prize most in life in a breath."

She bit her lip with vexation. His plea was so reasonable in appearance that she was reluctant to refuse, yet instinct told her it was a mistake.

"Isn't that spinning out the agony, Vivian?" she asked. "Wouldn't it be best to get it over?"

"Not from my point of view," he said, with a sigh. "But I suppose beggars mustn't be choosers. My fate is in your hands."

"Very well! We will wait three months," she said, quietly. "The position won't be pleasant for me, Vivian, but I don't complain. Now I must go."

HE rose to help her on with her cloak feeling well content; before three months had passed, he would find a way to remove young Melville Draycott from his path. He was house surgeon at some small London hospital, and the offer of an appointment in, say, South America would be irresistible. With the firm's connections in the Argentine that could easily be arranged; then he would find a way to clinch the engagement with Myra, and bring about a hasty wedding.

"May I kiss you, dear, even if it's the last time?" he asked.

She shivered with a sudden dislike. "No, Vivian, please don't," she pleaded. "We are engaged for a little while longer, but please never try to—— How strange! The telephone-bell is ringing."

He frowned at the thing angrily. It was infernally unlucky.

"I thought you said it was out of order," said Myra.

"It doesn't seem to be out of order now," he muttered, irritably, with the receiver at his ear. "Yes! Who is it speaking? What name?"

He put his hand over the receiver, and turned to Myra, looking extremely surprised and annoyed.

"It's the hall porter speaking. Draycott is here, and wants to see me. Heaven knows why he has come at this hour."

"Is he coming up? But I don't want Melville—that is, Dr. Draycott, to see me here. Can I get out?"

"You might happen to meet him in the corridor," he muttered. "Cut into my study, and as soon as I have got him settled with a drink, you can slip out by the other door."

She went through the doorway leading from his dining-room to the study, and he noticed with vexation that she did not shut the door. At the same instant Draycott rang the bell, and he admitted him.

"A bit late for a call, isn't it, Draycott?" he said, surlily.

"My business is important," remarked the young doctor.

He walked into the dining-room study, and tossed down his cap.

" I want to consult you, Duncan, on a very curious tangle that has arisen," he said. " No, thanks. No drinks. It's too weighty."

" Must be serious," said Vivian, and, for the life of him, he couldn't keep a sneer out of his voice.

Melville Draycott was a tall, strongly-knit man with curiously steady dark eyes that seemed to look deep into the heart of things ; Vivian always found it difficult to meet them.

" Won't you sit down ? " he growled, impatiently. " Is the discussion going to be long ? "

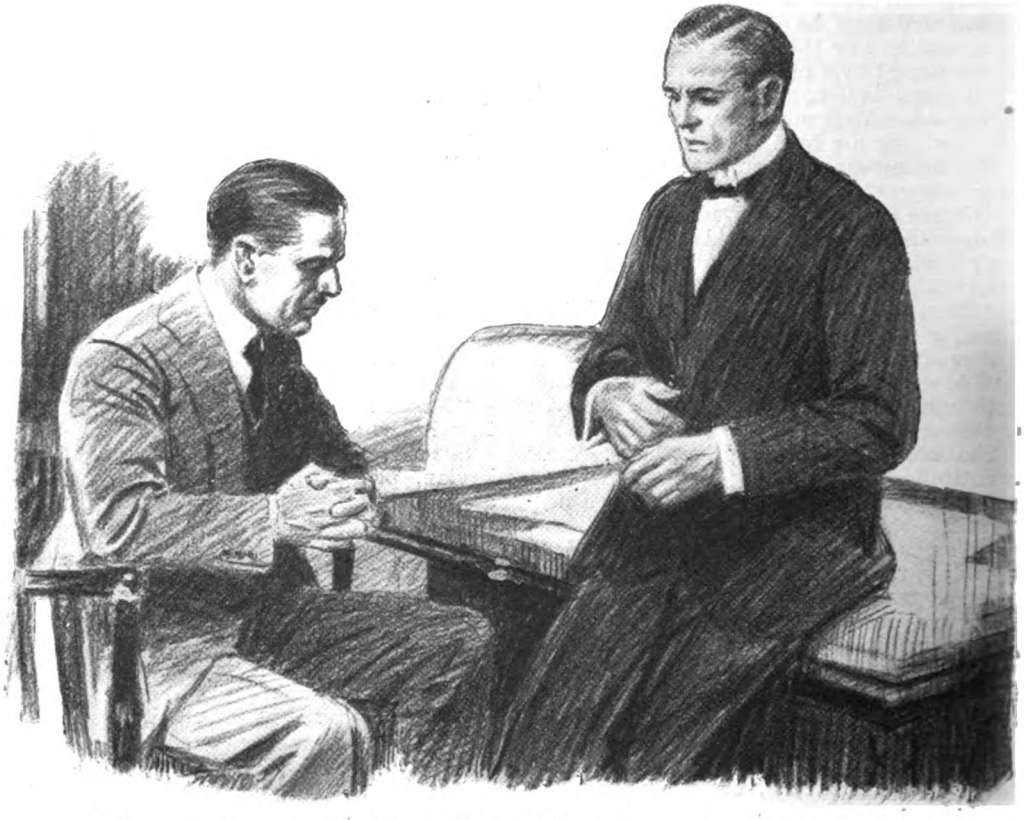
" I'm afraid so," replied the other, seating himself on the edge of the table. " I won't mention names, Duncan, but I think you will have no difficulty in filling in the blanks. I have an elderly friend who is a manufacturer in Lambeth. He is dead."

The other man stared at him and felt the tips of his fingers suddenly go cold ; he was wondering how on earth this hospital man knew the truth so soon.

At the same instant, the study door was drawn open, and Myra stood there framed in the doorway, white to the lips and staring at Draycott's back. She had heard the words, " He is dead."

Draycott continued his narrative in the cool even tone of a man accustomed to the issues of life and death.

" The old fellow passed over this evening," he said. " And I find myself in a difficult position. He has a daughter, a sweet, gracious, and beautiful young woman, Duncan, and I love her."



" Draycott was choosing his words carefully, and the girl standing behind him was

He was choosing his words carefully, and the girl standing behind him was still staring with dilated eyes, too horrified to speak.

" But she is engaged to another man," added Draycott. " And that is why my lips are sealed. This man is a scoundrel, and it is hard to say whether I ought to denounce him or hold my tongue. If I spoke my mind, it would seem like stabbing a rival in the back. Yet I cannot bring myself to remain silent. I have her happiness to consider."

Vivian Duncan moistened his lips ; it was

the presence of Myra that perplexed him most, for he felt sure that no matter what Draycott might suspect, no proof could be brought against him. If only Myra were not present he could handle this man with some confidence.

"Are you speaking of my partner, Sir John Leftwych, and myself?" he asked. "If so, what on earth makes you think Sir John is dead? It is shocking news, and I must go at once and——"

still staring with dilated eyes, too horrified to speak."

"You may sit still and listen to me," said the other in a tone of command. "All that can be done has been done. I shall break the news to his daughter myself."

The girl stood there, her hand pressed to her breast as if she were choking, but deadly silent.

"Let me tell you what has happened this evening," said the young doctor. "Sir John worked late in his office, but at about six o'clock, knowing that I was at the hospital only a quarter of a mile away, he asked me to call. He felt unwell."

Vivian frowned; here was a fact of which he knew nothing. He had left his partner at five-thirty; how was he to guess that the old man would send for Draycott?

"I found him in a very shaky condition," continued Draycott. "His heart was not sound, though he was good for twenty years if he went slowly. I recommended him to go home to bed, and offered to telephone to his daughter. He forbade this because he was unwilling to frighten her, but promised to go home at once and take a prescription I wrote out for him. It appeared he had had a shake-up during the day. His partner, a fellow whom he had treated as a son, had robbed him. It is possible, Duncan, that you can guess the partner's name."

The man collected his self-control admirably.

"It sounds as if you were trying to insult me, Draycott," he remarked, quietly. "I have no notion what put this monstrous idea in the old man's head. There is not a syllable of truth in it. I can only imagine he was wandering in his mind. Sick men get these fancies."

"He showed me the proofs," retorted Draycott, coldly. "I am not sure you will understand his point of view. He cared nothing for the loss of a few thousands. If he had known this scoundrel was in difficulties, he would have given him all he needed. He was heart-broken at discovering his true character. But let that pass, for the story is a curious one and I have not finished. I went back to my duties at the hospital, and at about eleven o'clock the police called. They had made their way into Sir John's works, because they were uneasy at seeing a light in his office and could get no answer to their knocks, and they had found him dead. They asked me to go there at once. I found Sir John still sitting in his chair. He had been shot in the head."

"Murdered?" cried Vivian, with well-acted surprise. "I thought you were going to say he——"

For the first time the girl gave a cry and Draycott looked round.

"I had no idea you were here, Myra," he said, in horror. "Oh, my dear, I wouldn't have had this happen for worlds."

She tottered to a chair and sat there

weeping for a moment or two; neither of the men spoke. It was not the time for idle words of comfort. Vivian stepped forward as if to claim a lover's privilege of comforting her, but was too cautious to face a certain rebuff.

"Why didn't you tell me she was here?" asked Draycott, in a low voice. "I thought we were alone."

But she had recovered her self-control now.

"You must tell me all," she said, quietly. "I came here, knowing nothing of all this, to break off my engagement, but I can't talk about that now. You must tell me all, please, Melville. Tell it in Vivian's presence, because I want to hear his reply."

THE young doctor looked at the other sternly; there was no escape for either of them.

"I certainly think I ought to hear these vague charges," said Duncan. "Draycott is determined to lower me in your eyes, Myra, but at least I can now defend myself. He has invented this story of my dishonesty, knowing that your father being dead there is no one to clear me. There is not a line of proof against me."

"That is true," remarked Draycott, dryly. "The incriminating documents have been removed."

For an instant, Vivian was silent; that was an awkward point, but after all it amounted to nothing.

"They existed nowhere except in your imagination," he said, sharply. "It is an easy thing to malign a man, and then say the proofs have vanished."

"I think you had better let me continue my story and get this painful scene over," continued Draycott. "The police told me Sir John had been murdered by a burglar; his office showed all the signs of robbery, and they had no clue to the culprit's identity. You must believe me, Myra, when I say that I did all that could be done for your father, but I fear it amounted to nothing. When I returned to the hospital, I found that a casualty case had come in. This is where the story becomes most strange. A bargee had been struck on the head and was insensible. His barge had drifted at random into one of the Westminster piers, and the police brought the case to us. An hour passed before he recovered consciousness and could explain things. An odd mischance had happened. In passing under the bridge, something fell and struck him. It was a revolver with five undischarged cartridges and one empty case in it. My theory is that the person who fired at Sir John crossed the bridge, and dropped his revolver over the parapet. But instead of falling into the water, it struck the bargee on the head."

"That is possible, of course," said Vivian, huskily. "But I'm afraid we shall never prove it."

"The revolver had the initials 'V. D.' on it," added Draycott. "It is a costly weapon, and there will be no difficulty in tracing it to its owner."

"Are you implying——"

Duncan had sprung to his feet; he was half-dazed by the strange way the missing clue had come to light. As for Myra, she shrank back in her chair staring at him with wild eyes.

"Are you implying that I——"

He was almost choking.

"—— that I murdered him?'

"No! No, you didn't murder him. That is the strangest fact of all," said Draycott, quietly. "I can prove your innocence and I shall do so. That is my duty."

Again there was silence. Duncan put his hand up to his throat and tore at his collar. He was trying to keep his self-control; trying not to betray himself, but for all his cleverness he was confused because the facts were so far beyond his understanding.

"It's my belief you are—you are mad," he said, thickly. "You—you are making up this tale."

"Sir John Leftwych was already a dead man when you fired the shot," said Draycott. "You intended to murder him, and fired from behind. But he had already gone beyond your reach. He must have died within half an hour of my leaving him."

"Take me away!"

The girl had risen; she was not crying; her pretty face was stricken with horror, and she clung to Draycott's arm.

"Take me away. I can bear no more," she whispered.

They passed out without another word, leaving behind them a man whose soul was stained with murder.

My Life of Song

by

TETRAZZINI

III.

"WHEN I WAS *NEARLY* HISSED."

WHEN I was in Venice on holiday, I enjoyed—yes, enjoyed—the sensation of being—*nearly* hissed! I met an old acquaintance, a girl who was playing a small part in a comic opera which was then being played in that city. Her part was that of a stage-struck girl who, trying to sing in opera, sings so badly that the public hiss her off the stage. My girl friend was admirably suited to the part—for she had a very feeble voice. Unfortunately, the audience objected to her singing off the key, although the author's instructions were that she had to do so. The poor young actress needed money very badly and was in poor health. She was in a dilemma. If she appeared, the audience would be infuriated by her; if she did not, she would starve.

"Don't worry. I'll sing for you for the three evenings they want to give that opera," I said to her. "You pretend to sing, but don't make a sound. I will go behind the scenes and sing, and no one in the audience will know."

My only difficulty was that I did not want anyone else connected with the theatre to know my identity; so we, my girl friend and I, concocted a pretty story. I was to pose as a young Russian whose family objected to her going on the stage, and I was supposed to be unable to speak more than a little Italian.

The arrangements were made and I went to the rehearsal in my oldest clothes, wearing a thick veil. Nobody paid me any attention until I began to sing, and then they all crowded round me in great excitement. But I couldn't talk to them as I spoke so little Italian.

Tetrazzini in holiday mood.

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The evening of the first performance came, and I sang the big aria from the first act of "Il Trovatore." Only I sang it as I was accustomed to sing it, and didn't go off the key. The time came when the old father in the play had to exclaim: "Oh, my child, my child, they are hissing her!" But the stage public had become so entranced with the way I sang this air that they forgot their part—which was to hiss. Not so the old man. When they did not act on his lines, he began to repeat them:—

"Oh, my child ——"

" Oh, shut up ! Shut up ! "

The real public had asserted themselves. Some of them were standing up, making angry signs to the old man to cease interrupting. The old man sat down looking surprised and cowed. I continued singing. At the close of the aria, when the trio comes in, the other two actors forgot even to try to sing; so I *sang the three parts alone.* At the end there was frantic applause and all the artistes went out to bow to the real public, my girl friend among them. But the audience were not so readily deceived.

" No, no," they shouted. " We want the real *prima donna.*" The embarrassed manager came to me and made signs to show that I must go out. This was a development against which I had made no provision, and I tried to hurry off by the wings. But the manager barred my passage and, taking me by the hand, led me to the front. Even though I still wore my veil, I felt certain that someone present would recognize me and startle the building by shouting " Tetrazzini ! " The audience did shout, but not my name. They shouted to me to remove my veil, and, there being no way of escape, I had to obey. Wonder of wonders ! There was no one present who had ever seen me or heard me sing before !

This scene was repeated on the succeeding and final nights, and no one detected that the unknown Russian singer was the well-known Tetrazzini. It is true that the author complained to the manager, his brother, that I wasn't true at all to his conception, a remark that might also apply to me when singing certain operas, for I like to improvise when I see an opportunity. The author of this comedy had insisted that the girl must sing badly, must get off the key, and must be hissed by the stage public. But the author was not supported in his complaint by his brother, the manager, who only replied : " Look at the box-office receipts ; the public flock to my theatre, which has had a unique and cheap boom."

The talented young Russian was obliged to leave the stage of this Venetian playhouse after those three performances, and disappeared from the town. A droll sequel came several years later when I was again in Buenos Aires. In the principal of the South American theatre I at once recognized the manager of the Venetian comedy theatre. It was not surprising that he failed at first to recognize in the *prima donna* named Tetrazzini the mysterious Russian *débutante* who had caused a minor commotion in his Venetian playhouse. But a few days after we had begun rehearsals he came up to me in a puzzled manner and said :—

" I feel certain that I have met you somewhere ; perhaps a long time ago. It wasn't in Buenos Aires ; it may have been in Italy. And I seem to recall that the circumstances of our meeting were unusual, though not unpleasant. Am I right ? Have I met you before, signora ? "

" You have," I replied, laughing heartily. " And what is more, I have sung as one of your artistes in your theatre in Venice."

With that he seemed still more mystified. " Tetrazzini, Tetrazzini, I am sure I have never had the honour——" He stopped and looked at me curiously for a moment, and then suddenly burst forth with " Good heavens ! Can it really be true ? Were you that mysterious Russian who sang my brother's opera and disappeared in as strange a way as you came ? "

" Yes, I was."

" And to think that I never recognized you ! Oh, what a joke ! No wonder we had to turn the people away." Then, speaking very sorrowfully, he said, " But what a pity. If we had only known we would have trebled the prices."

CANDOUR OF THE AMERICAN PRESS.

THE American newspapers, unlike the English Press, were not reluctant to comment upon my figure. One Philadelphia newspaper thought it proper to describe my " Violetta " thus : " Of course, Tetrazzini did not die of a wasting consumption ; but she entered into the pathetic spirit of the last act like an artiste, and no heartless monster in the gallery dared call out, as they did for the original ' Violetta ' in Italy : ' Where is your consumption ? I see only dropsy,' because the creator of ' Violetta ' happened to be very stout and forgot to go into training when she studied the *rôle.*"

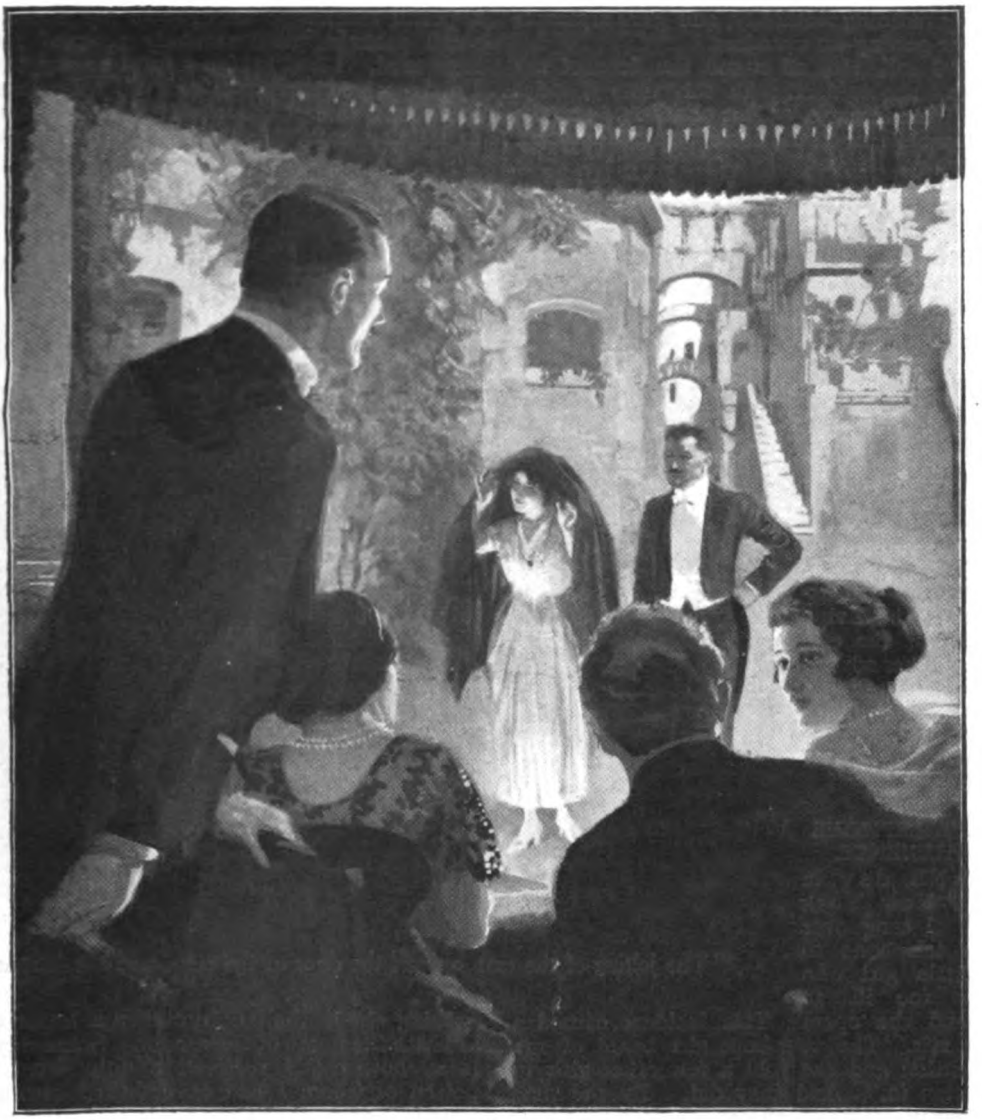
The secret of how I was able to look this part to perfection was discovered (so it professed) by the *Brooklyn Eagle,* which announced that " the *diva* was encased in what looked like a suit of armour, over which was a gown heavily weighted down with spangles to such an extent as to make it somewhat difficult of manipulation."

Newspaper references to the fact that I was not too slim were often made during my annual visits to the United States. I saw them on the occasion of my farewell tour in the winter of 1920–21. The *Evening Public Ledger* of Philadelphia—this town is particularly interested in the size and avoirdupois of visiting *prime donne*—published a photograph of me, and boldly headed it :—

PLUMP AND PROUD OF IT.

Underneath was the following :

" Tetrazzini, of course. The great singer was photographed to-day in her suite at the



" They shouted to me to remove my veil, and, there being no way of escape, I had to obey."

Bellevue, Stratford, after she had uttered words of consolation for stout women."

Then came the following typical Americanisms, in the form of headlines :—

SURE TETRAZZINI IS FAT;
DOESN'T CARE WHO KNOWS IT.

Famous Songbird shows Right Attitude for Plump Women to Take.

" Now, listen, you ladies who wear outsizes," the article began, " and be proud of your plumpness. ' Some people are born to be thin,' said the great Tetrazzini to-day, ' others to be fat. I belong to the latter class. And I'm not the least ashamed of it. Why should I be ? But see ! It is not fat after all ——' Here the soprano showed an astounding forearm. She had not exaggerated. The finest athlete in the world would have been proud to own the muscle and sinew displayed. ' Hard as nails ' was the only good description. Mme. Tetrazzini began to inhale very slowly, standing erect with her head thrown back. The visitor was amazed at the wonderful chest expansion which Mme. Tetrazzini so easily

accomplished. Tetrazzini said she exercised every morning faithfully, and gave a sample of her getting-up exercises.

"'I roll, too, all round the floor of my room,' she said, though this time she did not demonstrate. 'But outside, at the automobile, or on the horse, I do not exercise. It would be bad for my voice; I would get overheated and then catch cold. No, but indoors I do everything to keep myself in good condition. I believe the cure for almost everything great and small, almost every ill there is, is to breathe deep, from the bottom of the chest, like this.'

"Mme. Tetrazzini is the living proof of the efficacy of her advice. She looks in the pink of condition and she is very happy and full of spirits."

A TELEPHONE AUDIENCE.

ONE day in New York I sang over the telephone to a little girl who was too ill to attend the opera. This incident caused a big stir. The telephone girl heard of my intention and she told a few other girls to "listen in." And they did. By the time I began, a large audience was waiting at telephones all over New York to hear me sing the Mad Scene from "Lucia." Just then there were more "engaged" wires than usual in New York, and these, said the Press, "remained engaged until the last of the trills, runs, and pyrotechnical cadenzas had passed into memory."

A TRICK THAT FAILED.

IN America it became so common for persons to try to bounce money from me that I found it necessary always to take two detectives with me when on tour. One of these detectives had a case requiring his careful investigation immediately after I had engaged his services. I was then staying in an hotel in New York. One day a postal messenger brought to my room a small package, very carefully secured and registered. I had to sign a form to say that I had received this package. When I opened it I found that it contained what appeared to be two beautiful diamonds. There was nothing else in the box, not even a letter to indicate the name of the sender. Some days later, however, I received a note from a person of whom I had never heard, stating that if I wanted to buy these brilliants we could doubtless come to terms. I showed the letter to the waiter, who remembered a similar package arriving at another hotel at which he was once employed.

"Excuse me, madam," he said, "but I think you ought to ask your detective to come and see these." With that he went to the telephone, and in a few minutes the detective was in my room. Taking up the brilliants, he went to the window and examined them very carefully.

"False!" he exclaimed, as he returned them to me. "Do not buy them; send them back. Then we will see what happens. It is an old game, signora, and a very clever one that someone is about to try on you."

"The jolting of the cart opened the door of the cage, and the leopard

I sent the brilliants back to the person from whom they came, and then I saw that my detective was right in his diagnosis of the situation. By return of post there came back to me an amazing letter which stated that, instead of sending back the real diamonds that had been sent to me, I had substituted for them stones which were false. The writer demanded three thousand dollars as the difference between the value of the real and the false. It was, as the detective had suggested, a clever attempt to rob me of over six hundred pounds.

bounded down the street."

When the detective saw the letter, he went to find the writer, who happened to be a milkman anxious to get rich quickly. This milkman, when he found that instead of dealing with me he had to deal with the police force, immediately changed his tone. Though I did not prosecute him, my detective gave him a bad fright, and threatened that, if any similar case occurred in New York in the future, he would come and arrest him. I think that had the effect of frightening him off the false diamond business for good and sending him back to his less exciting occupation of selling milk.

A LEOPARD AT LIBERTY.

My fondness for animals, as well as my devotion to my friends, has often been commented upon in the Press. I have gone through many adventures and even got into a number of scrapes with port authorities in my desire to keep with me one of my particular pets. One strange favourite of mine caused considerable trouble on one occasion, and it was fortunate that the incident ended without someone being seriously injured. It was at the conclusion of a South American tour. I had been offered as a pet a more or less tame leopard, which I had accepted and was about to take back with me to Italy. This leopard was in a cage, travelling on the top of a luggage cart, which preceded my own carriage on the way to the boat. But the jolting of this cart opened the door of the cage, and the leopard, more surprised than pleased to be at liberty, bounded down the street, scattering the terrified pedestrians as he sped on. I called to my own driver to follow—which he did. My frightened pet, hearing my carriage clattering after him and the shrieks of the women in the street, dived into a tailor's shop. The astonished tailor threw one glance at his fearsome new customer and then, thinking he could obtain safety aloft, swarmed quickly up the little ladder which he was accustomed to use to reach the top shelves. But my leopard did not attempt to follow. He was more interested in preserving his own beautiful skin than in injuring the almost hysterical tailor. He found a dark corner underneath the counter, into which he entered, trembling and snarling. At that moment an armed policeman appeared and from the doorway cautiously surveyed the interior of the shop. My carriage arriving at the same moment, I jumped out just in time to stop the policeman from shooting my beautiful pet leopard. This was a more difficult task than catching the escaped animal, and I had to hand over a goodly sum as a bribe before the officer of the

law would consent to lower his aggressive weapon. The task of securing the leopard was quite easy. We built up barriers of rolls of cloth and, placing the cage near to the runaway, we were soon able to induce him to return to his rightful home. After the animal had been removed and the ten-minute sensation had died away, all that was left for me to do was to pay the tailor's bill for the temporary use of his shop and rolls of cloth. As I had recovered my leopard alive, I cheerfully paid the tailor the very stiff charge he made for his hospitality. After he had received my cheque, the tailor expressed the hope that next time I visited him I would bring a whole menagerie.

WHERE ARE THE GREAT SINGERS OF TO-MORROW ?

WHERE are the great singers who shall take the place of Patti, Melba, Jenny Lind, Tietjens, and those other *prime donne* of the glorious past ?

Occasionally a new star appears in some corner of the globe. I hear the name mentioned, and I say to myself : " Has the new *prima donna* actually arrived ? " I wait and wonder.

When I was singing in Spain my hopes rose high. A young singer came to me and asked me to hear her voice. I listened and secretly exulted. " Yes, I have found her," I said to myself—" the new international *prima donna*. She is a genius."

Her voice climbed to the sky without an effort. The timbre and quality, the easy bird-like notes, were such as are only commanded by the great ones of the earth. But her notes were not quite developed ; she could not then produce all the volume and beauty of tone without more study, more hard work, long hours of training, of rigid application, of self-control—yes, of self-sacrifice.

Not suspecting her real thoughts, I told my young genius what she must do and continue to do if she would be truly great. Her answer left me sad and sorrowful.

" What ! " she exclaimed. " You say I must start training over again ? Are you aware, madam, that I am a great artiste ? "

What could I say in answer ? Here was an undoubted genius, one with the makings of an international *prima donna*, but so self-opinionated and unwilling to be helped by someone qualified to assist that she took offence at hearing the truth. I bowed and said, " Oh, I beg your pardon for my presumption." And she went away.

To-day she is making her living as a professional singer at second-grade concerts in her native country. No one outside Spain seems to have heard of her name. Yet she might have been a Jenny Lind or a Patti to-day.

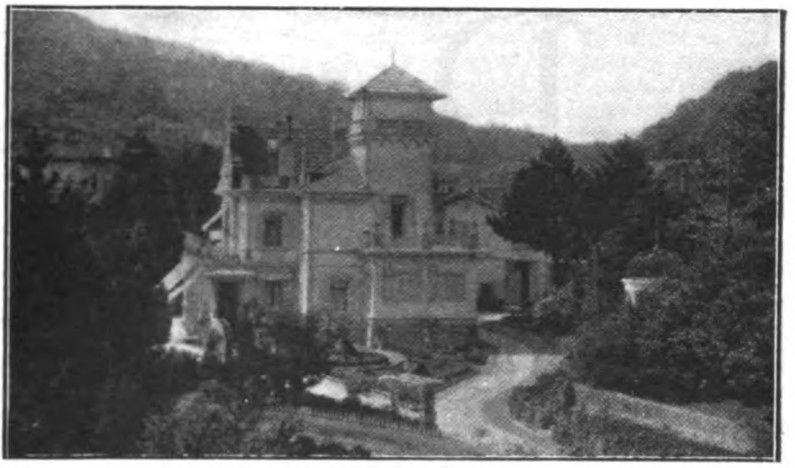
HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SINGING.

MANY of my correspondents write to ask me to give them some hints as to how to become a famous singer. One day I may write a book on this subject. In this, " My Life of Song," I have no space to give more than a few hints. I counsel every singer, whether on the stage or off it, to lose herself in her song, as I invariably do when singing. I am the joyous girl in a pretty garden in far-away Italy ; I am a daughter of Greece, wandering, pensive, in the shade of a noble temple, or I am the wild-hearted French maiden sorrowing for my ungrateful lover. Whatever *rôle* I am singing I actually become that person. Even then, one must temper feeling with reason. Sometimes when the dramatic situation demands sadness I forget myself to such an extent that sobs choke my throat, tears fill my eyes, and my voice almost breaks. The singer must never let herself go so far. When this happens, I have to take hold of myself suddenly. " Ho, Tetrazzini," I say, " what are you doing ? " Then my voice clears and I am the character again, but the character under the control of Tetrazzini.

In studying a new song I am in the habit of practising in front of a mirror in order to get an idea of the effect of a facial expression and to see that it does not take away from the correct position of the mouth.

When singing, always smile slightly. This slight smile at once relaxes the lips, allowing them free play for the words which they and the tongue must form. It also gives the singer a slight sensation of uplift necessary for singing. It is impossible to sing well when mentally depressed or even physically indisposed. Unless one has complete control over the entire vocal apparatus, and unless one can simulate a smile one does not feel, the voice will lack some of its resonant quality, particularly in the upper notes. Be careful not to simulate too broad a smile. Too wide a smile often accompanies what is called the " white voice." This is a voice production where a head resonance alone is employed, without sufficient of the *appogio* or enough of the mouth resonance to give the tone a vital quality. This " white voice " should be thoroughly understood, and is one of the many shades of tone a singer can use at times, just as the impressionist uses various unusual colours to produce certain atmospheric effects. For instance, in the Mad Scene in " Lucia," the

use of the "white voice" suggests the babbling of the mad woman, as the same voice in the last act of "Traviata," or in the last act of "La Bohème," suggests utter physical exhaustion and the approach of death. An entire voice production on these colourless lines, however, would always lack the brilliancy and the vitality which inspire enthusiasm. One of the compensations of the "white voice" singer is the fact that she usually possesses a perfect diction.



Tetrazzini's home on the Lake of Lugano.

The singer's expression must concern itself chiefly with the play of emotion around the eyes, eyebrows, and forehead. The average person has no idea how much expression can be conveyed by the eyebrows and eyelids. Yet complete emotional scale can be symbolized by these means. A very drooping eyebrow is expressive of fatigue, either physical or mental. This lowered eyelid is the aspect we see about us most of the time, particularly on people past their first youth. As it shows a lack of interest, it is not a favourite expression of actors, and is only employed where the *rôle* makes it necessary. Increasing anxiety is depicted by slanting the eyebrows obliquely in a downward line toward the nose. Concentrated attention draws the eyebrows together over the bridge of the nose, while furtiveness widens the space again without elevating the eyebrows. In the eyebrows alone you can depict mockery, every stage of anxiety or pain, astonishment, ecstasy, terror, suffering, fury, and admiration, besides all the subtle tones between. That is one reason why it is necessary to practise before the mirror—to see that the correct facial expression is present: that the face is not contorted by lines of suffering or by lines of mirth.

One word on the subject of corsets. There is no reason in the world why a singer should not wear corsets, and if singers have a tendency to grow stout a corset is usually a necessity. A singer's corset should be especially well-fitted around the hips, and should be extremely loose over the diaphragm. If made in this way it will not interfere in the slightest degree with the breath.

THOUGH every singer must take care of her health, she need not necessarily wrap herself in cotton-wool and lead a sequestered existence. At the same time, one cannot retain a position of eminence in the domain of song and also indulge in social dissipations. Society must be cut out of the life of the great singer, for the demands made by it on time and vitality can only be given at a sacrifice to her art.

The care of the health is an individual matter, and what agrees well with me would cause others to fall ill. I eat the plainest food always, and naturally, being Italian, I prefer the foods of my native land. But simple French or German cookery agrees with me quite as well. And I allow the tempting pastry, the rich and over-spiced patty, to pass me by untouched, consoling myself with fruit and fresh vegetables.

Personally, I never wear a collar, and have hardened my throat to a considerable extent by always wearing slightly cut-out gowns in the house, and even when I wear furs I do not have them closely drawn around my neck. Fresh air has been my most potent remedy at all times when I have been indisposed.

The foregoing hints may prove helpful to some of my readers, but they must not regard them as more than hints. This is not a book on "How to Sing," but a summary of the life of a singer.

In saying farewell to STRAND readers I would add that I hope to be in England again during the coming autumn and winter, when I shall again sing at the Royal Albert Hall, London, and at many of the big provincial towns of the British Isles.

[These articles are extracts from Mme. Tetrazzini's book, "My Life of Song," shortly to be published by Cassell & Co.]

Psyche and the Indicator

by

RAYMOND A. COULSON

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR FERRIER

THE Robertsons were a very temperamental couple. Indeed, that was all that was wrong with them. He was sober, upright, industrious, faithful, normally kind-hearted, and very intelligent. She was charming—rather hot-tempered, but almost always charming—always faithful, normally kind-hearted, and very intelligent. But they were both temperamental. She had been a designer of women's dresses before she married him, and everybody knows it needs a lot of temperament to produce really first-class dresses for women—indeed, temperament is the only thing it does need a lot of. He was one of those uncomfortable men who do their work at home—a writer—and temperament is very necessary for the production of optimistic philosophic essays, which was his particular line.

There is not usually room for more than one temperament in an ordinary-sized house. They were unable to afford a mansion with wide-spreading wings east and west, to the ends of which they could retire at opposite points of the compass when their peculiar needs demanded seclusion. And so, though they loved each other very much, there were sometimes little domestic scenes that distressed them both when one or the other came down to breakfast feeling unusually temperamental—or livery, as it would be called in ordinary people.

There are times and moods, they found, cold, leaden mornings, or evenings of tiresome days, when the least little thing untoward sets internal fires ablaze, when an angel straight out of heaven and still phosphorescent with the ineffable glory would get on one's nerves, and it is next to impossible to avoid lashing out with barbed sarcasms at the first person to hand, even though that person be the best beloved in all the world.

"When I come down feeling like the ten plagues," said Alfred, during one of their blissful reconciliations, "the only thing to do, Helen, dearest, is to leave me quite alone. Ignore me. Pretend I'm not there."

"I'm a perfect little pig to you sometimes, too," said Helen.

"Short!" admitted Alfred. "Short and snappy, like the modern ideal in belles-lettres."

"Of course, we don't mean anything by it," said Helen.

"As though we could seriously quarrel! It's deuced unpleasant while it lasts, but of course we don't mean anything. It's just a mood. If only we could be let alone altogether it would blow over in no time. It's when one gets going and works the other up——"

"But how's the other to know when it's dangerous to talk?"

"We ought to have a system of signals—a sort of 'take cover' for the dark mood, and 'all clear' for when the sun comes out. I know!" He paused and chuckled. "You've seen those wooden notices outside business offices—'Mr. So-and-So. In or Out,' with a little sliding panel to cover up the 'Out' when he's in, and the 'In' when he's out. We ought to have an arrangement of that kind, one each to fix on the coat lapel. When we feel bad-tempered, let the 'Out' show. If you see 'Out' on my indicator, behave just as though I were out. Have nothing to do with me. Without any fire to

keep it blazing, the bad mood's sure to die soon, and then snap! up comes the 'In' on the indicator, and we can be happy together once more."

It was the sort of whimsical notion that pleased their fancy. Alfred had a carpenter's bench in a shed in the garden, where he used to work by way of recreation, because it was one of his theories that every man should have a handicraft. Half in joke he set to work next morning and made a couple of little indicators, painted 'In' on them in gilt letters, and 'Out' in black ones with a purple edge. Then he arranged clips on the back of his, by which it fixed on the coat lapel, and for Helen he bought a gold bar brooch, from which the indicator was to hang by a silk ribbon.

Proudly they explained the device to their joint friend James. But somehow James was not impressed. He had known them both since they were small children. In those days he had been "Uncle James." Now he was just James, the family friend. He was one of those good-natured, comfortable, dependable people who nearly always approve of everything, and they were quite surprised when, instead of laughing that happy 'Ha, ha!" of his, he looked glum.

"I suppose it is a quaint idea," he said, slowly; "but it seems to me it works out as plain sulks."

"Nonsense!" said Alfred. "It's a temper-saving device."

"Yes, but—of course, I'm only a bachelor—but why have tempers with each other? Why not control 'em?"

"'When I come down feeling like the ten plagues,' said Alfred, during one of their blissful reconciliations, 'the only thing to do, Helen, dearest, is to leave me quite alone.'"

"The idea of this is to help us to do so."

"I know, but——"

"Oh, you don't know anything about it, James."

"No," said James, humbly.

The idea had to be carried out in a sportsmanlike spirit, of course, and they relied on each other for that. So when, after a tough struggle overnight with the optimistic philosophy, and five hundred words or so more of it to hack out before lunch, he came to breakfast with "Out" showing, usually she just smiled quietly, let him help himself with never a word said, and read the other neswpaper until the indicator clicked and the golden letters "In" shone once more. And when she felt a little weary of her concern with meals uncooked and socks undarned, and all the complicated and enormous task of looking after a man and his house; when, during those passing reactions against matrimony that even wives with the best regulated emotional structure sometimes suffer, she meditated wistfully on her days of bachelor-girl freedom to dine on buns and tinned salmon whenever she chose, and the washing had not come home, and Janet, her one little servant, was conscious of the burden of life too, and showing it—in short, when she felt like being out to him, and was, he (usually) accepted the situation cheerfully, moved about quietly, and was careful to drop his cigarette ash into the ash-trays, until the black cat prowled away to find some other couple with a human failing or so.

But, on the other hand, if you are feeling not quite so happy yourself as you would like, it may be aggravating to observe your undetachable partner approach blatantly advertising that he would rather you did not speak to him, and that he fancies a desert island for one as the ideal location. There are times when this would ruffle anybody. And so it happened, once or twice, or maybe a little oftener, that one "Out" on the indicator was promptly followed by the appearance of the other, and they would both sit as mum as mummies and as stiff as starch, each waiting for the other to come in.

IT may be, then, that these silent trials of strength did not really smooth matters, or maybe it was just that James chose a particularly unfortunate evening for his call. He had not seen them for some little time. The indicators had been clicking to and fro for a month or so, and the novelty had worn off. She had been thinking more often than usual of those bachelor-girl days when cream buns and cold sausage were enough for lunch, and he was finding the burden of consistent optimism almost more than could be borne, and meditated a revision and amplification of Schopenhauer up to date.

They were both "In" when James appeared, but for some time had been hovering on the doorstep.

"Cold night out," said James, heartily.

"Um!" said Alfred.

"Come and get warm," said Helen. "Don't take any notice of Alfred. He's trying to prove that chilblains are all for the best—you know, a bright topical article for the *Ladies' Home Furnisher*."

"I wish you wouldn't jeer at my work," said Alfred. "It buys our bread and butter, anyhow."

"Only a little joke," said Helen, mildly. "You might laugh sometimes, Alfred, even if you are an op—a philosopher."

"My woman gets chilblains," said James, hurriedly. "It's all that washing up. Beastly job! I should think an article about chilblains—how to prevent——"

"I'm not writing about chilblains," interrupted Alfred, with some violence. "Chilblains!"

"Jolly lot of red berries in the park just now," said James, staring firmly into the fire.

The remark was received in silence.

"Good thing for the birds," said James.

A coal dropped in the grate. "Have you any more interesting news?" asked Alfred.

"Eh?" said James. "News? N-no, I don't think I——"

"And I always used to be able to buy myself all the bread and butter I wanted," said Helen.

Alfred got up briskly. "Well, good night, James," he said. "I'm sorry; I've got to go out."

"Out!" James's eyes widened. "At this time of night! Oh, I see!"

Alfred had exposed the "Out" sign on his indicator, and retired with his pipe to the sofa in the corner. It may seem a very rude thing to have done, but James was so unselfish and kind-hearted nobody minded snubbing him or offering him those small slights that might be considered hurtful by the harder-natured.

"Good night, Helen," he said. "I'd better go."

"No, you don't. You don't——"

"Oh, yes."

"Oh, no." She pushed him back into his chair. "You've got to stay and have some supper. Alfred's out, and we'll have a nice quiet hour by our two selves."

"Well——" He glanced doubtfully over his shoulder at Alfred. "I'll just have a pipe, then."

"No, you won't. Have a cigar." She reached down Alfred's cigar-box and held it open before him.

"No, thanks. Really, I'd rather not. Men are sensitive about their cigars."

"Nonsense. Alfred will be delighted. Take one. Take that long one. I know they're good, he likes them so."

From the corner Alfred observed her select his last Partaga. "Now, where are the clippers?" she said, briskly. There was

Alfred, sitting in his corner and smoking like a chimney, began to feel ridiculous. She went on to describe to James his methods of work. "Poor boy, he does grind away so hard," she said. "But he gets it done so slowly——"

Click! "I'm in," Alfred announced, sulkily.

"How kind of you to come

"'Have a cigar. Alfred will be delighted. I know they're good—he likes them so!' From the corner Alfred observed her select his last Partaga."

a dangerous sparkle in her eyes and a flush on her cheeks. "Here you are! I'm quite expert at clipping them, you see." Laughing, she thrust the end into his mouth, struck a match, and lighted the cigar for him.

"It's a good job Alfred can't see us," she said, glancing at him archly.

"Is it? Why?"

"He's so jealous."

"Oh?" said James, tucking his toes under his chair and puffing uncomfortably at his cigar.

"Yes." She lowered her voice to a confidential note. "You wouldn't believe! Why, the other night—but perhaps I'd better not tell you."

"No, don't," said James, hurriedly.

back so soon!" flashed Helen. Her eye still sparkled with a frosty gleam.

"What about that supper?" Alfred inquired.

"You'd better look after your own bread and butter. If you can be out when James comes, I don't see why I shouldn't."

She leant back restfully in her chair. There was a muffled click, and the funereal letters "Out" appeared on her indicator.

"Damn!" said Alfred. "It's the girl's night out, too. We'll have to get our own supper. Ha, ha! Quite a lark, eh, James?"

"I'm going," said James, making once more for the door.

"No, you don't. You've been asked to have some supper, and have some supper you shall."

" I don't want any——"

" Nonsense, James. And, anyhow, you wouldn't leave me in the lurch to get my supper all by myself. Come on. I know where the tablecloth is, anyway."

He produced the folded cloth. " This is the only room with a decent fire, so we'll eat here," he said. " You clear these things away and put the cloth over while I get the rest of the stuff." He disappeared into the kitchen. James spread the cloth in a subdued manner, while Helen sat dreamy and silent.

" I can never find out where the cursed things are put," wailed Alfred's voice from the kitchen. There came a crash of breaking china. Helen jumped instinctively, but mastered herself and remained silent. " Only a dinner plate," Alfred called, cheerfully. " Quite a game, this picnic. Oh, damn the thing ! Why we can't have a tin-opener in this house that doesn't cut your hand every time you use it is a thing I've never been able to understand."

Presently he appeared with a trayful of eating utensils. " Tinned lobster," he announced. " We were going to have it for supper anyhow to-night. Saves trouble, you know, and Helen's very fond of tinned lobster. Still," he added, grimly, " it's so late now, I suppose she'll be getting supper out, wherever she is." He laid the knives and forks—for two.

" Just the least bit for me," said James, miserably. " I'm only eating to keep you company—I had dinner two hours ago." He might have added that lobster always disagreed with him, but did not.

Alfred chatted brightly, even feverishly. " More Burgundy," he said, filling his friend's glass. ' And more lobster," he added, deftly tipping all that remained in the dish on to James's plate.

" Look here," said James, ' if you're making me eat up all this lobster just to score off your wife, I think it's a low-down mean trick. '

There came a smart click behind him. Helen was in. " Nonsense, James," she said, coldly. " I don't want any lobster. Alfred is master in his own house, and may do exactly as he likes. He knows I don't want any supper to-night."

" Oh ! " James looked at her doubtfully. " I thought he was only paying you out for that cigar——"

" Nonsense," snapped Alfred. " Helen is at perfect liberty to offer my cigars to my friends. I have often told her so."

" Well——" James was beginning with an apologetic smile. A double click interrupted him. He turned from Helen to Alfred. " Out," " Out " appeared on their indicators.

" Oh, this *is* a rotten game of yours," said James. He rose, and for the third time that evening approached the door.

" I'll be going," he said, heavily. " Good night."

HE paused at the door, hesitated, and turned with the shy smile of the man who does not often get a bright idea, but likes it when he does. " Of course, since they're both out," he said, " it doesn't matter how long I stay. The place might be burgled with no one here." He approached the hearthrug, firmly planted a chair in the middle of it, and sat down. " It's a pity, a pity, to see those two getting angry with each other," he soliloquized aloud, warming his hands and staring into the fire. " Of course, it's only passing irritability, but they don't realize how that may wear away happiness. And they are so fond of each other, really. She doesn't know the things he's said to me about her when she's not been there. She doesn't know, and I can't tell her. You can't go up to a young woman and say, ' You don't realize how much your husband loves you.' It would be impertinence. So she'll never know.

" And when he was so ill six months ago—he always saw her then smiling and cheerful. He doesn't know how she used to come to me, quite worn out, and cry and cry. He doesn t know. And I can't tell him.

" And they don't know why it is I'm an old bachelor now, and pretty lonely. They don't know that I had my chance once, and the loveliest girl that ever lived was going to marry me, and I lost my chance, wrecked it, threw it away, all because of my cursed temper, that meant nothing. I expect they think I'm naturally good-tempered. They don't know it's the world, and life, and hard knocks that have made me try to be tolerant.

" And even marriage is not so secure—not so secure. They think it is, but it's not. They don't know—— "

There came a tiny sob from Helen. Alfred was staring fixedly out of the window, and apparently failing to notice that the blind was down.

" Oh, come in, you two ! " said James.

" Dearest James ! " cried Helen, into his coat lapel.

" I've been a fool, old man," said Alfred, slapping him violently on the back. ' But I'm not going to be any more."

" There's a nice fire," remarked James. " Throw those two silly things into it."

And within five seconds the indicators were blazing merrily.

The Laird's Lucky Number

by J. J. BELL

ILLUSTRATED BY CHAS. CROMBIE

CONSIDERING his ancestry, one could but regard the Laird of Cockernony as a freak—a sport, in the non-sporting sense—a miss-shoot of the family tree. All his forbears had been fighting men, more or less, sober or in their cups; their womenfolk thrifty, patient housewives, devoid of ideas save those domestic.

But at forty-two the Laird was a recluse, a bookworm, a bachelor, with never an intimate acquaintance, much less a boon companion. Perhaps he might have imbibed at least a flavouring of the ancestral spirit, had his father survived that steeplechase of forty years ago. As for his mother, kindly enough in her rare moments of leisure, she had spent her existence and herself in "keeping a clean house" and saving pennies. To all intents and purposes, the Laird was brought up intellectually by a poor schoolmaster who had seldom crossed the bounds of his own county.

At thirty the Laird found himself alone, helpless alike in worldly and domestic matters. Fortunately, and thanks to the maternal parsimony, he could afford to pay a man to attend to his business affairs, and a woman to—well, we shall see.

On the evening of his forty-second birthday —unaware, one imagines, of the anniversary —the Laird dined, as usual, in the dingy parlour, which was the only habitable living-room in Cockernony House. The dining-room had the atmosphere of a vault; the drawing-room was positively mouldy. The housekeeper was supposed to air and fire them regularly; but the Laird, from lack of courage, had long since given up inspecting his property.

He was now attacking—the right word—the third and concluding course, a blancmange. Ten years ago he had diffidently mentioned to his new housekeeper a liking for blancmange and tapioca; since when he had received them night about.

It was not an attractive table. Early in her period of service Mrs. Crow had got into the habit of setting down all the courses at once, and changing the cloth not oftener than twice a month. The Laird had disapproved, but silently, and as time went on his resentment became moribund in custom.

But this evening it awoke, stirred, revived. Why, who shall say? It may have been the dinner; for the soup had been singed, the potatoes parboiled, the chop cremated, and the bluish, sugarless blancmange would have stopped a bullet. Yet these were no novelties. Again, it may have been the book lying to the left of his plate, wherein he had chanced on a reference to that good old

gourmet, Lucullus. But probably it was merely a long-suppressed instinct inherited from his mother, who had ever combined a certain niceness with her frugality.

Enough that the Laird was angry—angrier than for many a day. With his spoon he gave the uneatable blancmange a vicious slap and pushed away his plate. He looked around him, and suddenly the squalor of the apartment became vividly evident—the dust on the sideboard, the ragged holes in the carpet, the cobwebs in the corners, the grime on the pictures, one of them badly askew, and a dozen other eyesores.

He rose and advanced to the ancient bell-rope of faded crimson and moulting tassel. But his courage had not yet reached the sticking-point. With a groan he snatched up his book and drew himself heavily into his easy chair. The dust rose around him. In impotent wrath he kicked out with his right foot; his old carpet slipper, loose by reason of the burst at the heel, flew off; and he beheld that which ought not to have been visible at such an hour—his great toe. But neither was the sight thereof a novelty. Nevertheless, it brought him to action. He reached out and gave the rope a mild tug.

DOWN in the kitchen, a disorderly, dilapidated, but agreeably fuggy place, Mrs. Crow sat drinking her third cup of tea and buttering her fourth slice of hot toast. At the single tinkle of the bell she started, stared, and remarking to herself that a mouse had done it, returned to her pleasing occupation. At fifty-five Mrs. Crow was hardly of prepossessing appearance; but let us be kind, and merely say that she was flat-chested, duck-footed, fish-like, and frowsy.

While the bell still feebly waggled an aged man, in shabby tweeds, came in from the scullery, where he had been chopping wood, and gazed up at it, gaping, in the greatest astonishment.

"Mrs. Crow," he said, turning at last, "are ye no' goin' to answer it?"

"It was a moose," she replied, and bit deeply into the succulent toast; adding indistinctly, "He would never tak' sich a gross liberty."

Whereupon the bell rang briskly.

With a grunt of annoyance Mrs. Crow proceeded to finish her meal.

"It'll be near ten year since that bell was rung," observed the old man, returning, with wagging head, to his chopping.

Upstairs the Laird eyed ruefully the bell-rope lying in a heap on the floor, and wished he hadn't done it. Yet the resentment still glowed.

Suddenly the door flew in, as it were. Mrs. Crow took the threshold in a stride, halted in an attitude of high dignity, and with awesome haughtiness put the question:—

"Did ye ring?"

With something of an effort the Laird got up, went to the table, and, indicating the blancmange and other things, emitted sundry not very coherent critical remarks. And before the astounded Mrs. Crow could find speech, he went on, with a slight increase of confidence, to mumble concerning the general filth of the room. And as she opened her mouth, he stammered:—

"Mrs. Crow, kindly put that picture straight."

She seemed about to refuse; then all at once she pranced, rather than walked, to the picture, and gave it a savage jerk. And lo, "The Stag at Bay" crashed at her feet.

"Well, it's yoursel' to blame for that," she snapped at him.

The Laird was well-nigh exhausted; but he made one more effort. Going back to the hearth, he bent his head and blew along the mantelshelf. A cloud arose. The Laird called attention to it with a gesture, stumbled into his easy chair, and raised more dust.

Then Mrs. Crow let herself go. It was quite a long speech, but delivered under such stress of emotion that the Laird caught little save the concluding sentence, to wit:—

"I winna bide here to be insulted—and that's ma advice to you!"

The door banged. The Laird shuddered, opened his eyes, and closed them again. He had won the battle, but where was the glow of victory?

ABOUT an hour later the old man-of-all-work came in with an ill-smelling lamp, which he placed on the table, thereby adding an oil stain to the cloth's numerous disfigurements. Then he drew near to the Laird, and said in a hoarse whisper:—

"She's awa'!"

"Good job, too!" answered the Laird, with spurious sprightliness. "Ye'll not be sorry, Peter."

"I was glad to see her tail," Peter admitted. "But, oh, Laird, it'll no' be easy to get another to come to this oot-o'-the-way place."

"We'll advertise, Peter, we'll advertise! We'll do it at once and catch the night post. Clear the table, man, as quick as ye can." And the Laird got up to procure writing materials.

His grey poll waggling dubiously, Peter took a plate in one hand, a glass in the other, and moved slowly towards the door.

"Come back," cried the Laird impatiently. "Ye'll never clear at that rate." He brought the four corners of the cloth together, and handed the resulting bundle to his ancient servitor, who, without evincing the slightest astonishment, took it, tottered from the

room, across the dim hall, and down the stone stair, shedding as he went a miscellany of objects, including the blancmange.

"Never again," said the Laird, as he plunged his pen, "will I be subject to a housekeeper. Henceforth I'll be master as well as Laird."

On the second morning following, his advertisement appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* :—

Housekeeper wanted for single gentleman of retiring, studious disposition. Cleanliness, tidiness, and good plain cookery essential. Character no object. Generous treatment. Apply at once—fare paid—to Laird, Cockernony House, Cockernony, by Cambusdowie.

The reckless disregard of character was probably due to the fact that Mrs. Crow's references of ten years ago had been positively brilliant.

CAMBUSDOWIE'S daily train rolled into the platform up to time. The official, who represented station-master, porter, signalman, booking-clerk, and ticket collector, came leisurely from his little house, lingering over his last mouthful of dinner. There was seldom much—and often nothing—doing at Cambusdowie. Five persons on the platform all at once made for bustle and animation. Judge then of the official's amazement when every third-class compartment disgorged women—women of all sorts and sizes, youngish, oldish, attractive, and otherwise. Most of them looked cross; all looked eager.

The official recovered in time to reach the gate in front of the crowd. Several voices inquired the way to Cockernony House. He answered mechanically, and proceeded to take tickets like a man in a dream. Later, his brain having cleared, he counted one hundred and two squares of pasteboard.

The women went up the road in no very orderly fashion, striding, trotting, each seemingly bent on being first. As the official drew breath, the local constable appeared with the natural enough question—"What's ado ?"

"The Laird has gone mad," said the official, wiping his brow. "He surely imagines he's King Solomon."

"I'd better be lookin' into it, anyway," said the constable, after a moment's reflection. "Ye never can tell what women'll be after nowadays." And he strode in the wake of the procession.

It was at this moment that Peter gloomily asked the Laird—"Dae ye think onybody'll come ?"

The Laird had his doubts and was in low spirits. He and Peter had found themselves incapable of cooking anything more palatable than singed porridge; and, somehow, they had managed to burst the old-fashioned kitchen boiler and flood the premises downstairs.

"Surely somebody'll come," sighed the Laird. "I'm sure I made the advertisement as attractive as I could."

"If onybody comes," remarked Peter, "I'm thinkin' she'll be seekin' a spouse. Beware, Laird, o' the big, handsome sort!"

"Behave yourself, Peter, and go to the door and see if anybody's coming. The train was due twenty minutes ago."

When Peter looked down the avenue he received the shock of his life. He tottered back to the parlour.

"Oh, Laird, Laird!"

"What is it, man ?"

"Keek oot o' the window."

The Laird "keeked," and staggered back to his easy chair.

"Heaven help me!" he said, "and I've promised to pay their fares! Quick, Peter! Run to the door. Don't let a soul o' them in."

"But what'll I say to them ?"

"Anything—anything to keep them back till I think what's to be done."

Peter did his best with the mob, members of which were beginning to voice their suspicions that the whole affair was a hoax. He explained that his master was in a fit, but hoped to be out of it shortly. This ought to have had a reassuring effect, but somehow it hadn't; and Peter was becoming incoherent when the constable, pushing his way through the crowd, joined him.

On obtaining a comprehension of the circumstances the constable addressed the gathering.

"It will be aal right, ladies," he said pleasantly. "There is no need for to be excited. The Laird was not looking for so many of you, and he is a gentleman of great modesty. But he is a man of his word; and if he promised to pay your fares, he will do it, you may be sure. It will be aal right. And now kindly form yourselves into a queue."

Presently he took Peter by the arm and led him indoors. Having locked and bolted the antique and massive door, they passed to the parlour.

The Laird was in his easy chair, his head in his hands.

"You would be the better of a dram, Laird," the constable said without preface.

The Laird signed feebly to Peter, who brought decanter and glasses from the sideboard. The constable helped himself, drank, and said it was a deplorable business.

"Man," cried the Laird, sitting up, "do ye think I can interview all those women ?"

"I do not," the constable replied. "A gladiator could not do it. A lawyer might; but you cannot get a lawyer to-day."

"What am I to do ?"

"'Oh, Laird! Laird! Keek oot o' the window!' 'Heaven help me!' said the Laird, 'and I've promised to pay their fares.'"

"Give them their fares and send them home."

"Ay; but I must have a housekeeper."

"Would you have the pluck to go out and choose one, Laird?"

"What would the others say?"

"Ay, that's just it! And they might break your windows for you."

A dismal silence lasted till the constable, having taken a second dram, said:—

"I was thinking they might draw lots; but I doubt if they would be willing. However, there's another way. Have you a lucky number?"

"A what?"

"A number that has brought you luck in the past."

"Nothing ever brought me luck."

"Well, well! Suppose you choose a number—anything between one and a hundred—that you think would be lucky."

"I can't think of a number."

"Oh, try!"

The Laird, groaning, brought some letters from his pocket and turned them over.

"Here's No. 37 on the demand for income-tax."

"That'll do fine! Now listen, Laird! I'll go outside and number them in their queue, tellin' each her number. And then I'll explain that no human being could interview the half o' them afore the train leaves—and so you have chose a number and will hereby and forthwith engage the lady holding that number—viz., 37. How's that?"

"Ay," said the Laird, thoughtfully, "it's not a bad plan; but, mind ye, constable, I must have a modest woman."

"Keep a firm hand on her, Laird, and the flightiest'll be modest enough. Come; you'd better decide. They're getting restless out there."

"Do what ye can for me, constable," said the Laird wearily, after a little more talk, and fell again to moaning.

The constable went out. On his appearance the queue ceased its conversation, which had been confined to the remark "Don't push!" and the retort "I didn't!" Methodically he gave each applicant her number, and returned to the top step.

"Ladies, the Laird is a just man. He sees that it would be humanly impossible to interview a quarter of you before train time; and he could not ask you to stop the night in the byre with the cows. So he has chose a lucky number, ladies, and the lady which owns it is hereby engaged for to be his housekeeper, at thirty shillin's a week, all found. All other ladies will be paid their fares, wi'

sixpence extra for a cup o' tea and a bun, as soon as he can get change for a hunderd-pound note."

The constable paused, possibly in anticipation of applause, which was not forthcoming; then drew a long breath and said :—

"I will now declare the lucky number. It is 37—otherwise three dozen and one over. Lady No. 37 will kindly step forth from the queue and follow me."

In a painful silence, for the queue was for the moment deprived of speech, No. 37 stepped slowly forth. If modesty was enough, then the Laird was lucky. Her garb was dingy black; her bearing diffident. Humbly she moved, so overcome, apparently, by her good fortune that she sobbed freely into a large grey handkerchief.

As she ascended the steps a murmur ran through the queue; as she entered the house, the queue disarticulated. Cries arose.

In the parlour Peter bent over his master and said hoarsely :—

"It's comin'! Noo, Laird, dinna let her think ye're soft. Dinna let her hope for marriage. Try and look like a roarin' lion."

The Laird rose like a sick man. The constable entered and smilingly ushered in No. 37.

"Laird," he said, "this is the lady you've solemnly engaged to be your housekeeper, and I'll take the liberty o' drinking a glass to your mutual——" Hand on decanter, he paused, staring.

Peter in a hushed gasp called on his Maker.

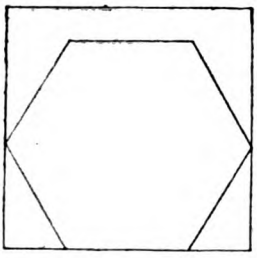
The Laird recoiled against the mantelpiece.

And the owner of the lucky number, withdrawing at last the grey handkerchief, disclosed the woebegone, penitent, but familiar fish-like countenance of Mrs. Crow.

PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

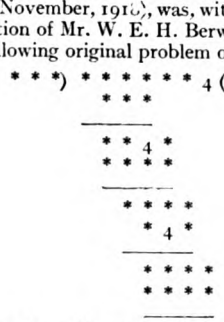
554.—PAPER FOLDING.

THIS is a branch of puzzledom that we have scarcely touched in these pages, but it is both instructive and interesting. I do not refer to folding paper into the forms of boxes, boats, etc., but to the solving of certain geometrical problems with paper and fingers alone. I will give a comparatively easy example this month, and later on present one of a rather more difficult character. Suppose you are given a perfectly square piece of paper, how are you going to fold it so as to indicate by creases a regular hexagon, as shown in the illustration, all ready to be cut out? Of course you must use no pencil, measure, or instrument of any kind whatever. The hexagon may be in any position in the square.



555.—THE FOUR FOURS.

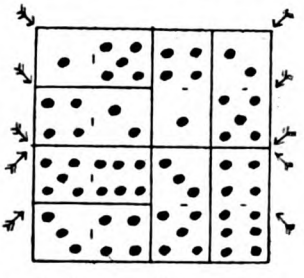
IT appears that our No 428, "Simple Division" (October–November, 1916), was, with a slight difference, the invention of Mr. W. E. H. Berwick, who now sends me the following original problem on the same lines :—



There are four different ways of filling in the missing figures so as to leave a correctly worked long division sum (in scale ten), and the puzzle is to find them all.

556.—THE EIGHT DOMINOES.

TAKE any eight dominoes you like and arrange them in the form of a square so that no number is repeated in any line, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. The arrows will indicate what I mean by the last word—not only the two long diagonals, but those parallel with them. Now, what is the largest number of pips you can get in the square? In the example there are sixty pips, but this can be beaten. Unless you are very careful you will find that your answer will show two pips fewer than the maximum possible.



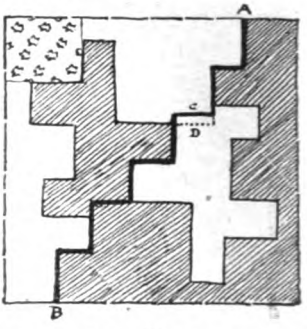
557.—ODDS AND EVENS.

HERE is a little parlour trick, the explanation of which is quite easy. Ask a friend to take an even number of coins in one hand and an odd number in the other. You then undertake to tell him which hand holds the odd and which the even. Tell him to multiply the number in the right hand by 7 and the number in the left by 6, add the two products together, and tell you the result. You can then immediately give him the required answer. How are you to do it? In practice, after he had given me the result, I should say, "Let us add your age, now deduct the day of the month," and so on—a lot of absurd apparent calculations merely devised for his mystification, for you already know the answer.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

550.—THE PATCHWORK QUILT.

EXCEPT for my warning, the reader might have supposed that the dark zigzag line from A to B would solve the puzzle. But it will not, because the pieces are not of the same size and shape. It would be all right if we could go along the dotted line D, instead of C, but that would mean cutting a piece. We must cut out all the shaded portion in one piece, which will exactly match the other. One portion of the patchwork is drawn in, just to guide the eye when comparing with the original.



551.—TWO QUEER WORDS.

THE words are UNITED and UNTIED. It is curious that the reversal of the two central letters results in two words of exactly opposite meaning.

552.—A WAGES PARADOX.

SUPPOSE a man has been receiving a weekly wage of £3 10s. This is then increased to £200 per annum, to be paid monthly by cheque. But for some good reason it is decided for the first month of the new arrangement to continue paying week by week, and there are five weekly pay days in this first month. As the total paid in this month must be £16 13s. 4d., it follows that the weekly sum paid on each of the five pay days will be £3 6s. 8d. only, or less by 3s. 4d. than under the old arrangement! He thus receives less per week, though earning more per annum!

553.—THE QUEEN AND THE CHAIR.

I HAVE not yet hit on any satisfactory answer to this enigma.

543.—AN UNSOLVED ENIGMA.

SEVERAL correspondents have suggested PEN as the answer. This was my own best guess, but I rejected it, mainly for the reason that it does not appear to fit the last line. The Misses Hardy suggest PRESS, an East Indian animal with brownish fur, a squeeze, the printing press, the literary press, the drill press (which quivers when in use), the linen press, the botanical press, copying press, cider press, the press-bed (which is folded up and "put to sleep" when you wake, but in active service when you sleep), etc., etc. I leave readers to fit in the various applications. This is the best answer forthcoming, and possibly the correct one.

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A Very Food for Growing Children.

Let them have it without stint.

8d. per 1/4 lb.

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The delicious and subtle Oriental Perfume, revealed as the Cigarette is smoked, conveys a new meaning to the cigarette smoker.

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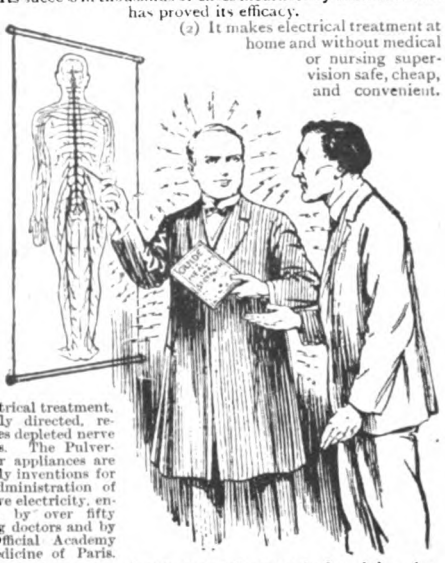

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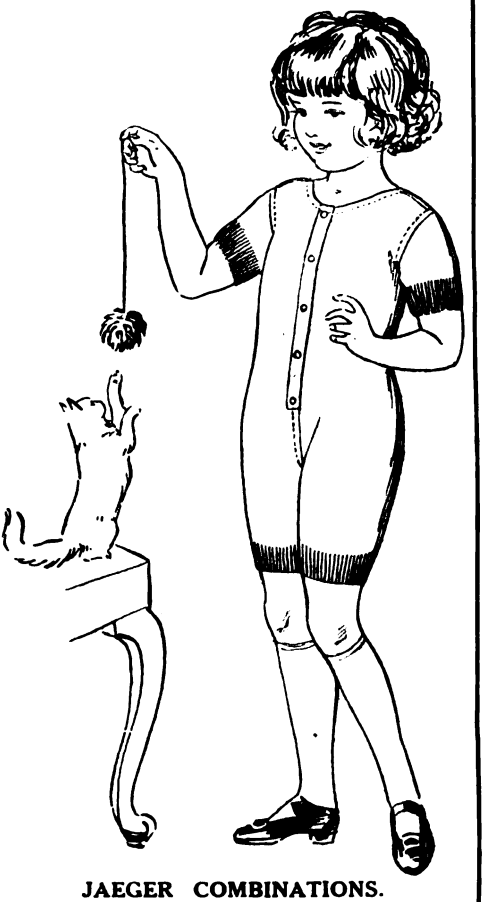

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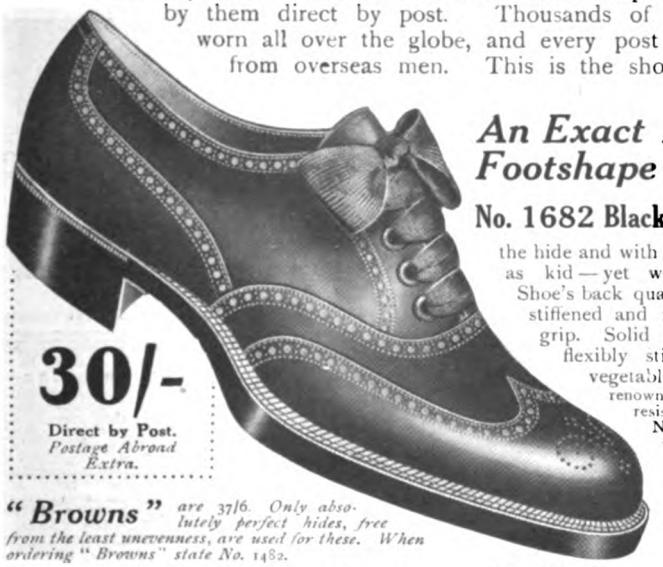

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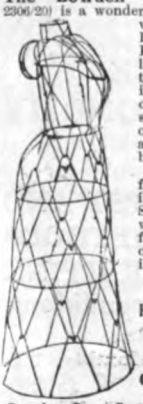

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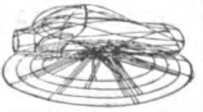

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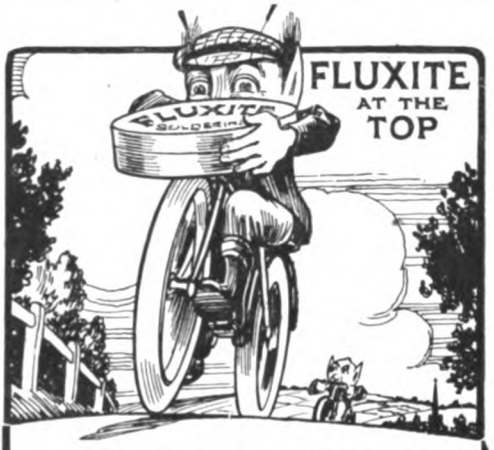

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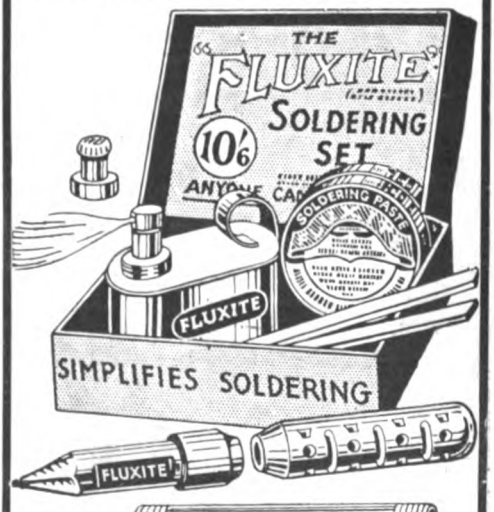

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